

NO OTHER WAY

BY GORDON HOLMES

Author of "A Mysterious Disappearance,"
"The De Berey Affair," "The Late Tenant," Etc.



"Where's the Child's Mother?" He Demanded.

CHAPTER I. The Open Door

APPLY for an adjournment? Draw back now, after all the horror and ignominy of the last year? Why should I?"

The woman's pale features flushed with indignation, and the brown tint in her eyes kindled into flame. Mowlem, of Mowlem & Wrench, bent his gray head again over a newspaper lying open on his office table.

"In the circumstances, it seems rather hard," he murmured, half in plea, half in apology. Indeed, at that moment he was thinking, "Why couldn't the idiot have been content

—at any rate, discreet? No man in New York today has a prettier wife."

"Hard!" Mrs. Waverton fastened on the word almost fiercely. Young as she was, and dainty in figure and costume as a bit of rare Chelsea, she had suffered so much at the hands of her scapegrace husband that endurance was at an end. "You say it is hard that I should secure my freedom because this cruel man has met with an accident. If you and I were living in an earlier age, we should admit rather that he had been punished by Providence for some of the wrong and injustice he has inflicted on others. What of my long-drawn-out torture,—the sneers, the shrugs, the malicious whisperings, of society? Do you know what people are saying? 'Oh, Curly Waverton isn't half bad—shouldn't wonder if that little New England puritan of a wife of his does make his life miserable.' I imagine you keep aloof from the shallow people in our set, Mr. Mowlem; but they form some part of my world, and that is how they talk. 'Poor Curly! a real good fellow if you take him the right way.' Never a word for the weeping, outraged wife! Never a thought for the sweet little girl who, some day in years to come, will wring my heart by asking why she has never seen her father! Oh, the bitterness and wickedness of it all! And now, because his mischievous life is checked by a mishap, probably the direct outcome of his evil ways, the pity goes only to the man and is withheld from the woman!"

Tears glistened in the brown eyes, and the incensed voice broke.

Mowlem adjusted his spectacles, sat back in his chair,

and lifted both hands in mild protest against the storm he had raised so unwittingly. "My dear Mrs. Waverton—" he began.

"I am not your dear Mrs. Waverton, or you would never even hint at a withdrawal of my suit! It is only common fairness that I should demand justification in the eyes of the world!"

"Believe me, I meant nothing of the sort. I—er—suggested a postponement. The courts are always open to reasonable laxity in procedure when one of the parties to a suit can be shown to be prevented by illness or serious injury from putting in an appearance."

"But I have been given to understand that this case would be undefended."

"True—quite true, my dear lady. There is, there can be, no defense. Unhappily, and I use the word solely in its application to you, Mr. Waverton seems to have welcomed rather than evaded the petition. His lawyers have accepted service, and there the matter rests. I assure you I am thinking wholly of your interests, and of your position in that very world of gossip and slander which cares so little for the rights and wrongs of these domestic upheavals. Come, now, take a calm view of the facts! Mr. Waverton is lying at Palm Beach with a sprained wrist and a severe scalp wound, the outcome of an automobile smash. His condition will certainly be mentioned in court, and in any event it will be referred to by the newspapers. It is an unfortunate occurrence at this crisis in your affairs; but I should fail in my duty if I did not point out that you risk the loss of public sympathy, whatever its value may be, by appearing against him this week."

Doris Waverton sighed. Such outbursts of emotion as that with which she had momentarily overwhelmed the lawyer were not habitual. Usually she was self-contained and reserved,—there was an element of truth in the description, "a pretty New England puritan," given her by some of her acquaintances,—but today, when the ordeal for which she had nerved herself threatened to be deferred, the hidden springs of her being had risen in revolt.

"What is the alternative?" she asked, after a pause.

"An application to a Judge to hold over the proceedings until some later date—say, October. And there is one other argument. To a man of Claude Waverton's habits, an accident of this kind is likely to be more serious than if he lived a regular and temperate

life. In addition to his other injuries, he is suffering from a shock to the system. He may die."

"Such men do not die. They live to plague others."

"We lawyers train ourselves to disregard sentiment in these matters. On general principles, your husband is not a good subject to be pitched headlong into a dry watercourse."

MRS. WAVERTON rose and went to the window. She looked out over Trinity churchyard, where trees and shrubs were expanding their spring buds in the beams of a bright sun.

"I have not heard the exact details," said the woman at last, and her voice was weary and broken. "What does it say in the newspaper?"

Mr. Mowlem coughed and readjusted his spectacles. "Generally speaking—" he began.

"Forgive me, but I wish to hear the exact text."

She spoke over her shoulder, and did not notice that the man's deeply lined, legal face showed some hint of perplexity. Evidently he did not wish to peruse the item just as it stood; but he seemed to obey his client's demand instantly.

"A Palm Beach correspondent telegraphs under date of yesterday," he read:

Claude G. Waverton, well known in sporting circles in the United States and Europe, met with a serious accident last night when motoring from Boynton to Palm Beach.

It seems that Mr. Waverton had been spending the evening at a house near Boynton, an establishment where baccarat and stud poker are not unknown. His chauffeur happened to be ill; so Waverton was alone in the car when he began the return journey at midnight, and, as he has the reputation of being a daring driver, he was urged to take the old coast road, which is safer, though somewhat longer, than the new road skirting the lakes. He appears, however, to have disregarded this advice, because his overturned car was found at daybreak this morning, close to the railroad track, where the lake road crosses it some five miles from Palm Beach. Near the car was lying the dead body of a man, apparently some wayfarer who had been run over, while Waverton himself was stretched unconscious in a small cañon, some thirty feet below a retaining wall. Were it not for a guava tree breaking his fall, and becoming entangled with his clothing, he would have slipped into a sinkhole, as the descent at this point is almost precipitous.

Waverton, it is rumored, had won a large sum of money at roulette during the evening, and it was assumed at first that he had been attacked and robbed. The police, how-

ever, discovered notes to the value of twenty-five thousand dollars in his pocketbook, and this, it is estimated, would be approximately the amount of his winnings.

By a singular coincidence, yesterday was Waverton's birthday. He then became thirty-three years old, and he backed that number heavily when a Florida millionaire took the bank. Curiously enough, 33 turned up nine times in thirty-three coups—in one freak run it came three times in succession. There was a good deal of excitement in the house during this singular run of luck, which took place between ten P. M. and ten-forty-five P. M., and Edgar O. Schwartz, the host, was much annoyed because of the high betting between Waverton and the banker, both of whom must have arranged to play roulette that evening, and came well fixed with cash.

After another slight cough and a pause the lawyer went on:

The man whose dead body was found near Claude G. Waverton's car has been identified as Charles B. Scott, an American tutor in the family of Don Miguel Santander of Rosala, in the Argentine. By a sad fatality, it appears that Don Santander and his wife, with their household, had arranged to leave Palm Beach for New York today, and the tutor would have accompanied them. It was his habit to take long walks late at night.

The Coroner's theory of the accident is that Waverton tried to avoid hitting the pedestrian, whom he had come on suddenly in the worst section of an awkward curve, but that the automobile either swerved or skidded on some wet leaves. The dead man had evidently been driven with fearful force against a telegraph pole, as medical examination showed that his skull was fractured and his neck broken.

The lawyer's quiet voice dropped, with the manner of one who had come to the end of a paragraph, and Mrs. Waverton turned from the window.

"Is that all?" she asked.

"Practically all."

"But nothing definite is said there concerning my—concerning Claude's injuries?"

"Oh, it gives a few details—those I have already told you of."

Mr. Mowlem was a precise man. He disliked subterfuge, and was noted for his avoidance of the lawyer-like inexactitudes known as legal fictions. Something in his air caught Doris Waverton's troubled glance. And she was unquestionably a bright and intelligent creature,—little more than a girl in years, but a woman in sad experience.

"I think I ought to know all the facts, Mr. Mowlem, before making a decision that may have a far-reaching effect in the future," she said quietly.

There was no escape for the lawyer. He might still have juggled with words; but he realized that his client would surely learn the truth before many hours had elapsed, and he could not assume the onus of actually misleading her.

He picked up the newspaper again, and read:

Waverton was taken to Asphodel House, Palm Beach, where he was attended by Drs. Bentley and Mercier. He was badly shaken and bruised, and had lost a good deal of blood from scalp wounds in addition to sustaining a nasty sprain of his right wrist; but he has recovered consciousness, and will probably regain his buoyant, good health. It is stated, however, that he is still somewhat confused, and suffering from shock, so he can give no clear account of the accident.

"Asphodel House!" said Mrs. Waverton, and the lawyer knew at once that the wife who was about to yield had become hard as flint.

"Yes."

"That woman, Mrs. Delamar, lives there, does she not?"

"Yes."

"Claude will be nursed carefully, I am sure. The suit must proceed, Mr. Mowlem. There cannot be any adjournment."

"As you please, Mrs. Waverton."

THE whole thrilling sequel of tragedy and passion rested on that slight foundation. If a zealous newspaper correspondent at Palm Beach had omitted to state the name of the residence to which the wounded man had been conveyed, Claude Waverton's wife would have accepted the lawyer's advice, and the suit of Waverton vs. Waverton would have dropped out of the divorce list—for a time, at any rate.

As it was, the law took its course. There could be only one result. "Curly" Waverton had conducted himself like a scoundrel. Within a year of the wedding he had already so ill treated his charming bride that she was compelled to take refuge in her sister's house. Time and again had she gone back, until her misery could find no sure outlet save by the public way of a dissolution of the marriage.

Doris Waverton announced that, with the sanction of the court, in the future she would revert to her maiden name. Although a rich woman in her own right, she insisted that her daughter's interests should be safeguarded, and with that object Mowlem & Wrench exacted the last dollar in the shape of settlements and alimony. No difficulties were raised; it almost seemed as if the respondent's lawyers were instructed to settle at any price.

MEANWHILE, Claude Waverton had been removed from Asphodel House to a secluded hotel at Palm Beach. Thence, when able to travel, he was taken to a sanatorium in Tennessee. Some three or four months later he came to New York, and the day after his arrival found him in the office of the family lawyers on Wall-st., where certain trust deeds and other documents awaited his signature.

The head of the firm, Mr. Curtis, of Curtis & Lamb, received him with the gravely paternal air that elderly legal advisers are wont to assume in the presence of wealthy prodigals.

He saw at a glance that Waverton had gone through a good deal more than the newspapers had stated. He looked older and thinner. The scars across his forehead, though healed now, had obviously been wounds of size and depth, and he still carried his right arm in a sling. The curly brown hair that had suggested his familiar nickname was sheared off closely, and there were traces of other cuts on the top and back of his head.

But, more noticeable than any of these minor evils, which time would assuage and almost efface, was the new expression in Waverton's eyes and mouth. In the old days he was seldom or never absolutely sober, and his air of vacuous good humor and thorough enjoyment of life had deceived people into crediting him with qualities he either did not possess or could conceal most effectually where his wife was concerned. Now, it was a cold, self-contained man who met the lawyer's polite inquiries as to his convalescence, and he spoke in a straightforward manner that Curtis found positively surprising.

Waverton seemed to become aware of a scrutinizing glance. "I am a somewhat changed person since my accident, Mr. Curtis," he said. "It has left its mark on me, as you have seen for yourself, no doubt. I mean to look into my affairs, put everything in order, and go away for a long rest. Will it matter if I sign papers with my left hand?"

"Not in the least, provided your signature is attested. But, may I ask—"

"Yes, my right wrist was sprained and dislocated, and that is far worse than a break, as everybody knows. Can you come with me to my bank? I called at the bank this morning, and the teller explained that he had seen so little of me in the past that my illiterate scrawl needed some explanation. Of course, I don't blame him; but this matter should be put right."

"Certainly. I had no idea you were so knocked about. I am sorry now, Mr. Waverton, that we did not appeal to your wife's sense of fair play—"

"Great Scott, Man! on what plea?"

"The proceedings might have been delayed. There is no knowing what might have happened in the new conditions."

"But I wished no obstacles whatever to be imposed. I telegraphed my explicit instructions."

"Of course, of course. I acted on them without reserve."

"Has not everything been for the best? I am free, and Mrs. Waverton is free, and I gather from your last letter that she will receive nearly ten thousand dollars a year from the trustees. She has nothing to grumble at now, surely?"

Curtis was still more puzzled; but he did not want to quarrel with a good client. "Your wife—" he began.

Waverton broke in curtly. "Please remember that she has ceased to be my wife."

"Well, then, the former Mrs. Waverton is a very charming woman, and it might have been possible for both of you to make a fresh start in life."

"Not a bit of it! No more charming women for me! Who succeeds to the property? This divorce complicates matters a bit, doesn't it?"

The lawyer lifted his hands in pained astonishment. "Obviously, the estate is yours absolutely," he said, "yours to do with as you will, subject to—er—the provision made by the court for Mrs. Waverton and the child. Your cousin, were he alive, would have to be considered, perhaps; but, since he is dead, its disposition rests with you. Yet, a young man like you need not be seriously perplexed about your successor. You have had a sufficiently narrow escape on this occasion to warrant immunity from further mishap for a long time."

"But how about my will?"

"As you are aware, the disposition made on your marriage created a trust for Mrs. Waverton and her children—if any."

"Does that hold good now?"

"Assuredly, until you alter it. Shall I take fresh instructions?"

"No."

The lawyer dropped the pen he had taken in his hand by force of habit. "You mean that the old will is to stand?" he said, genuinely bewildered.

"Yes, of course. I may be a scamp; but I don't intend to rob that infant. The child succeeds to everything, I take it, with a life interest for her mother?"

"Exactly. You will not be angry with me if I say that you have a closer grasp of affairs now than—er—before your accident, Mr. Waverton."

"The actual fact is that my head is in a whirl. I forget things. I don't know my own belongings sometimes. I told you I was conscious of a change, and, for the most part, it takes that shape, forgetfulness. At any rate, I am not bemused with drink, and that counts for something. Now, how soon can I escape from New York,—a week, a fortnight?"

"I shall use all expedition. By the way, may I acquaint Mrs. Waverton's lawyers with your extraordinarily generous decision?"

"Why?"

"Candidly, I think she ought to know."

"Again, why?"

"Because—well, I must out with it—people who have been divorced have agreed to be married again. Such a thing is not unknown."

A shadow crossed Waverton's worn face, in which the bronze of open-air life was now merged in the pallor of several weeks of close confinement and inaction.

"If that is the only reason, I wish Mrs. Waverton to remain in ignorance of my intention."

"Suppose she thinks of marrying some other man?" pressed the lawyer, who was persuaded that two lives were being wrecked needlessly.

"We shall deal with that development when it arises."

SO there was nothing more to be said; but a good deal remained to be done, and it was the middle of July before Claude Waverton left his house on 64th-st., and, accompanied only by his English valet, took a train for Narragansett Pier.

He glanced casually through recent entries in the hotel register before signing his own name. The hotel did not appear to be crowded, and he found that he could have his choice of several suites. He selected a sitting room and bedroom on the first floor at the southeast corner, and thereby marked himself as one who could not only discriminate but pay; yet the clerk seemed to hesitate somewhat when he learned his guest's name. Nothing was said, however, and Waverton went out into the sunshine, leaving his man to make the rooms habitable.

Filled with a sudden longing to renew an old love for the clean, cold, steel-gray Atlantic, which differs as greatly from the lazy ocean that laps the Florida sand dunes as the prairie differs from a trim lawn, he made straight for the seafloor. The tide was high, and a strong swell was breaking against the promenade; but there were boats out in plenty, and a few adventurous persons were bathing.

He started to walk along the shore, breathing in the clean, pure air. A few hundred yards from the hotel are great rocks that rise out of the sea, which, in a measure, take the place of the pier from which the resort got its name. The pier was destroyed some thirty-odd years ago.

On the rocks were two women and a Normandy nurse, the latter holding in her arms a delightful little maid, who was much interested in watching the maneuvers of a little sloop that was tacking back and forth in lively fashion.

Something caused one of the women to turn her head at the very instant Waverton was passing. Her face, already highly colored, owing to the splendid breeze, grew crimson, and she uttered a gasp of amazement which brought her companion's eyes quickly round. One of them, it was never known which, moved involuntarily, and caught the nurse's arm with her elbow; but all that Waverton saw was the outward leap of the child, which fell into the sea.

NOW, Claude Waverton might be a wicked man and a libertine, but he had the quick eye and sure judgment of one who had dwelt far from cities. Even while the first wild screams of all three women were ringing in his ears, he sped across to the rocks, and with one moment of poise while he noted the whereabouts of the white frock in the depths of the churning water, had leaped twenty feet down into the sea.

He was so prompt and fearless in acting that, once in the water, he had no further difficulty. Although practically one-armed, being hampered by bandages, he seized the child's frock in his teeth, thrust his left arm through a buoy, and simply kicked out with his feet to keep away from the rocks until the men in a sloop came to the rescue.

It was near the hour when all of Narragansett turns toward the bathing beach. The screams of the women attracted a crowd that seemed to spring from nowhere, and it was eager for excitement. After dragging Waverton and the child on board, the sloop sailed to a nearby landing float. The man slipped ashore, carrying the frightened and screaming but unharmed child in his arms, to be met by a cheering crowd that hurried to the float. So many hands were stretched out to help him that he demanded with rather a scowl:

"Where is the child's mother, or nurse?"

A buxom bonne, wearing the coif and cloak of her calling, struggled through the throng on the beach, and the little one recognized her with a loud cry of "Nana!"

"Oh, Monsieur Claude, what is it that I should say, me?" sobbed the woman in French, as she received her dripping charge with a reassuring hug.

Waverton was so taken aback by her recognition that he could not answer; but he became aware that the nurse joined the two women he had seen on the pier, and the trio hurried off, though one of them walked so unsteadily that she had to be assisted by her friend.

"Well, did you ever see the like of that?" said an indignant girl in the crowd.

"With never a word of thanks to the man who saved her child!" cried another.

"Such people are not fit to be trusted with a baby," declared a third.

At last, followed by an enthusiastic escort, Waverton reached the hotel, and was glad to gain its sheltering porch.

THE manager met him in the hall. "What a wonderful thing, Mr. Waverton!" he said, his eyes kindling with enthusiasm.

"No one has done anything wonderful," said Waverton tartly. "Would you mind sending a page to show me my rooms?"

"I'll come myself, with pleasure. This way. Now, Boy, quick with that elevator!"

As they walked along the upper corridor, Waverton realized that the hotel manager had become unaccountably silent.

"Do you know whose child it was that fell into the sea?" he asked.

"Of course I do," came the surprised answer.

"Is the mother staying in this hotel?"

"Yes."

"Oh, the deuce take it! Who is she?"

"Her name is given as Mrs. Elstead."

Waverton put his left hand to his head as though in an effort to touch some chord of memory stirred by the name.

"Mrs. Waverton chose to be known by that name,"

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Sir," went on the man, with the sympathetic voice of one forced by circumstances to be unpleasantly explicit.

"Mrs. Waverton!" and that gasp of amazement was convincing.

"Yes, Sir. Haven't you realized that you have saved the life of your own little girl? That is why I said it was wonderful. I have never before known such a thing, never! You might have been brought here by Providence! Here is your room, Sir. Shall I send you anything—a little brandy, or a stiff cocktail? You need a stimulant of some kind, Mr. Waverton."

CHAPTER II.
Showing How the Door Was Closed

NO. No brandy, thank you." Waverton paused in front of the door of his suite with the air of a man who was collecting his scattered thoughts.

"I suppose the other lady who accompanied Mrs. Waverton was her sister, Mrs. Daunt?" he said. Then, noticing that the manager was genuinely perplexed, he added, "You don't know, of course, that I did not chance to see either of the ladies. I had a vague notion that there were two of them, with a nurse and a baby, when suddenly the youngster fell into the sea. After that there was no time for gazing at anybody."

"It was marvelous, Sir, marvelous! A gentleman sitting on the balcony was looking directly at you through a telescope, and saw the whole thing. It was he who called me out and told me of it. Yes, the other lady is Mrs. Daunt. They have been here a fortnight, and, I think I ought to mention it, their rooms are on this floor."

Waverton laughed rather pleasantly. His somewhat hard and severe features changed their expression most markedly when he smiled. Then it was difficult to believe that he could possibly be the man depicted in lurid language by that rhetorical lawyer, Hector J. Hickory, in his "opening" on behalf of the petitioner in "Waverton vs. Waverton."

"I shall not trouble them long by my presence in Narragansett," he said. "If the opportunity serves, you might give them a hint that I shall be off on Monday to some less popular resort. Meanwhile, I want all meals served in my room. Will you kindly have some strong tea sent up now?"

HE turned the handle and entered the sitting room. The place was in a litter of clothes, linen, and shoes; for the valet was unpacking his master's belongings, and thought he had a clear hour at his disposal. He was beginning to apologize for the disorder of chairs and tables, when his trained eye traveled over Waverton's costume, and a horrified glance spoke volumes.

"It's all right, Rice. I have only been in the sea. No damage done; though I lost my hat—the same one I wore that night at Palm Beach, eh? I hope I have seen the last of it. I seem to find trouble when I don't that particular chapeau."

There was a knock at the door, and a page entered, bearing a green Homburg hat. He began explaining that a fisherman had brought it. The boy was flustered when Waverton laughed and Rice grinned discreetly.

"Tell him to take it, with my compliments, and here's a dollar to go with it," said Waverton. "Now, Rice, help me off with these wet clothes, and get me a fresh rig."

"Shall I give you a good rubdown, Sir?" "Yes, please do; but go easy. I am still sore at the base of my neck and about the lumbar region."

Rice was not sure where the lumbar region was; but he had been surprised that his skill as a rubber was not in demand of late, because Waverton, in preaccident days, kept his limbs supple by frequent massage. Despite seven years of almost continuous residence in the United States, Rice remained incurably British in language and manner.

"My word, Sir!" he said, when his deft hands were busy with sponge and towel. "Your illness did take it out of you, an' no mistake!"

"Why, don't you think I am as fit as I was?"

"You must have lost pounds and pounds, Sir. Your muscles show up a bit better, for all that. I shouldn't be surprised, Sir, if you ain't a better man when your arm gets right. Effect of proper diet an' nursing, Sir."

"Now, Rice, be candid. It's the effect of less rum, isn't it?"

"Well, Mr. Claude, if you put it like that—"

"Steady there! My ribs won't bear pressing. Thanks, I'll rub my breast myself."

Look here, Rice, you fellows generally hear all the news below stairs. Why didn't you tell me Mrs. Waverton had gone to Narragansett?"

"You don't mean to say, Sir—"

"So you didn't know? Moreover, she is in this very hotel, with Mrs. Daunt—and the baby."

"Miss Kathleen, Sir?"

"Yes. I have just fished Miss Kathleen out of the Atlantic. She fell in from the end of the rocks."

The valet did then forget himself, and emitted a short, sharp whistle between his teeth.

"I guessed that would make you blow off steam," laughed Waverton. "If Mrs. Delamar were to show up now, I should run out of the hotel, call the first cab, and tell the man to drive in a bee line for the next five days."

"I wish you'd never seen that lady, Mr. Claude," said Rice, with unusual earnestness. "I'll tell you honestly I don't like her. When you were brought in for dead to Asphodel House she wouldn't let me go near your room—no, not for days! I don't want to speak uncharitably of anybody, but I couldn't help thinkin' of the money you had won at Mr. Schwartz's place, Sir. It was in everybody's mouth next day. A maid showed it to me in the Palm Beach newspaper. Never was I so glad of anything as when you sent for me an' said we was off to the hotel."

"Do you find a great change in me, Rice?" "Change, Mr. Claude? Why, it's a miracle, that's what it is!"

The man was conscious instantly that he had said a little too much; but Waverton passed the slip without comment—or, rather, he appeared to misunderstand its underlying cause.

"I came rather near eternity that night, Rice," he said quietly. "And the few days I was forced to remain in bed and live on slops gave me time for thought. Mrs. Delamar was not exactly my good angel; but she was kind enough while I was ill. Anyhow, we don't want her anywhere near Narragansett. No, I'll not dress for dinner. A blue serge, please. I'm going out again, and I don't wish to be mobbed as a hero as I stroll along the front. I shall avoid the beach and casino. You need not sort out all those things now. We leave early on Monday."

RICE was taking the wet clothes to be dried, when he met Celestine, the nurse, whom he had not set eyes on during many months. She hailed him excitedly, and had sufficient English to recite the afternoon's occurrences. A little later she sent a page to bring him out into the corridor, and then informed him that Mrs. Waverton wished to see him.

Now, Rice admired his former mistress greatly, and had always regarded Waverton as the biggest fool in Christendom in respect to his treatment of a very attractive wife. Indeed, Rice himself was on the lookout for another situation at the time of the accident in Florida, and he was puzzled to account for the undoubted fact that he got on much better with his employer since the latter's illness. Three months earlier, if put on the witness stand, he would have testified unhesitatingly in Mrs. Waverton's behalf; but, for some occult reason, which he would have failed completely to explain, he was now half inclined to believe that, bad as "Mr. Claude" had unquestionably been, his wife might have used more tact with him, and not have shunned him during the last year as if he were a leper.

These things were running through his head as he passed along the corridor with Celestine and was admitted to a sitting room in which he found Mrs. Waverton and her sister. Kneeling in the depths of a big sofa, and wholly engrossed by the pink eyes of a Teddy bear, was the golden-haired child who had been snatched from death little more than an hour ago.

Rice bowed. Seldom at a loss for words, he now congratulated Mrs. Waverton on Miss Kathleen's escape.

"I understand that Mr. Waverton arrived here only this morning," began Doris rather nervously.

"Mr. Claude didn't even wait to see his own suite, Ma'am. He just stood in the hall for a minute, told me to put his things tidy, an' walked out. From what I have heard since, Ma'am, he must have gone straight along the shore—he was brought here by Providence, I do believe."

So Rice and the hotel manager evidently thought that supernatural attention was being devoted to Narragansett that day. Mrs. Waverton—or Mrs. Elstead, as she figured on the hotel register—was pale

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enough now, and her eyes were downcast. She did not check the valet's enthusiasm; but her utterance was still halting when she explained why she had sent for him.

"You are the only person in the hotel, Rice, whom I can take into my confidence," she said. "I shall be quite outspoken. Do you think Mr. Waverton would come and see me if I sent him a note? Mrs. Daunt and I have been discussing matters, and I—I feel that I ought to thank him for saving Kathleen's life."

Mrs. Daunt, some three years older than her sister, and so happily married to a New York banker that she was already crystallizing into sedate matronhood, shook her head.

"Of course we are profoundly grateful for Claude's action, and we cannot help admiring his gallantry: but my own view is that it would be best to say these things in a letter," she declared.

THE valet, a veritable Solomon in settling disputes below stairs, was conscious of a problem that called for careful handling. Like most men of his class, he was intensely loyal, even to a bad master, and Waverton, though vicious and dissolute, had never been ungenerous. Then, he was sorry for Mrs. Waverton, and would be proud and glad if the unhappy couple were reunited. Finally, there was Mrs. Daunt, who represented all that he thought most fitting and seemly in family life. He touched his clean-shaven upper lip with the tips of the fingers of his right hand, and the left hand went to the small of his back. The staff at 64th-st., or The Dene, the Waverton estate on Lake Champlain, would have known instantly that a judicial pronouncement was imminent. It came: he rejected Mrs. Daunt's counsel summarily.

"It 'ud be a fine thing, Ma'am, if you an' Mr. Claude could meet an' have a friendly talk," he said.

Mrs. Daunt smiled,—not unkindly; for she liked and respected Rice,—but the younger woman raised her beautiful eyes and looked at him fixedly.

"Are you saying this because of my baby's rescue, or for other reasons?" she asked wistfully.

Up went Rice's right hand again: the left had not moved. "Mr. Claude is greatly changed since his accident, Ma'am," he said. "In what respect? You may speak plainly, without fear of giving offense or of your words being repeated."

"It's hard to explain, but he's a different man."

"Do you think he—regrets?"

Now, Rice was at a loss how to phrase his thoughts; but he essayed the task valiantly. "It's not so much that, Ma'am, as in other ways. He hardly touches a drop of liquor,—just a glass of wine for dinner, an' it's always claret, never champagne. He talks differently. And I happen to know he is sorry for some things, such as—well, such as recent matters in Florida. If you'll excuse my way of puttin' it, Ma'am, he seems to have wiped the slate with a wet sponge."

"Women's lives are not slates, Rice," broke in Phyllis Daunt, her tone betraying a most pronounced disbelief in her ex-brother-in-law's conversion.

"No, Ma'am, an' Mr. Claude might be very angry if he heard that I called him a wet sponge," said Rice seriously.

Mrs. Daunt laughed outright, and even Doris smiled.

"We are discussing methods, not personalities," said the younger woman, correcting her sister rather than the valet. "Thank you, Rice. You have confirmed an opinion I formed, even after one hasty glance. Mr. Waverton must have been very ill at Palm Beach?"

"He was indeed, Ma'am." Rice nearly added something of the recent talk between Waverton and himself; but he repressed the impulse. "Least said soonest mended," was one of his axioms.

"Very well. I shall send that note. Please oblige me by seeing that my—that Mr. Waverton receives it as soon as he comes in. I understand that he is out at the moment: otherwise I could not have brought you here."

WHEN Waverton returned to the hotel he looked five years younger. He had walked along the Point Judith road by way of the golf links, and the keen air of the Neck had brought renewed vitality to his cheeks and lent buoyancy to his step. Still, anyone watching him as he emerged from the stairs—he had avoided the elevator—might have discovered a certain furtiveness, or anxiety, in his eyes as he glanced into the corridor in which his rooms were situated. To his evident relief, it was empty. When he reached the sitting room, Rice handed him a note.

"Maid left this half an hour ago, Sir," he said.

Waverton looked at the well formed, characteristic handwriting on the envelop, and glanced sharply at the valet; who, however, was raising the blind to admit more light. But Rice possessed excellent hearing, and he certainly caught something like a muttered oburgation from his employer when the letter had been perused.

"Ascertain the first train that leaves here," came the imperative command, and by the time Rice was back with the information his master had a letter written and sealed.

"There's no train until late this afternoon, Sir; but we can take the ferry to Newport any time. It's only a short drive to—"

"Very well, we'll go as quickly as we can. Order some luncheon sent here. Get my bill. Ring for a boy."

Rice, above all else a well trained servant, obeyed in silence. A bellboy came.

"Do you know Mrs. Elstead's room?" asked Waverton, and the boy confided to his particular friend afterward that his eyes went through him like gimlets. "Very well, take this note to the lady. There is no answer."

"What address shall I put on the baggage labels, Mr. Claude?" inquired Rice ten minutes later.

He passed without comment the inaccessible place mentioned in a monosyllable. Waverton laughed with the vexed air of a man who was being unnecessarily worried.

"Oh, I don't know. We'll decide at Newport. No, we'll go on to Providence. It's easier to get away from. We'll pick up the sea somewhere else on Monday."

AND so the door of reconciliation was closed, closed with a bang!

Perhaps this man's hard and unrelenting heart might have softened had he seen the white, tear-stained face peering through a curtained window on the first floor, as the hotel omnibus took Rice and himself away at half-past seven.

"I told you it was of no avail, Doris," said Mrs. Daunt, as her arm stole round the weeping woman's shoulders. "He is a downright bad lot, and you are well rid of him."

"I—I was beginning to hope—for Kathleen's sake—"

"You dear, impulsive child, you could never have taken him back! Surely you see now how mistaken you were in holding out the olive branch. He is the meanest, most despicable man on earth today!"

And about that moment Claude Waverton, while the motorcar carried him to the ferry landing, was discussing himself.

"Women are never satisfied," he murmured. "Now, one would have thought that Doris Waverton was well rid of a scamp!"

BUT the Narragansett Pier incident did not end with a woman's simple request for a meeting, "owing to the extraordinary event" that had taken place that day, and a man's curt refusal to see her, or, indeed, to acknowledge anything remarkable in an action that he would have performed "for any child in like circumstances." The excuse for a scrawl, "owing to an accident," was in itself an insult. It seemed to put her completely out of his life.

Next morning the Sunday newspapers glowed with the romance of it all. "Society Sensation"—"Divorced Husband's Gallantry"—"Claude G. Waverton Rescues His Own Child from Drowning"—the headlines blazed like comets over the land.

In the same journals, often on the same page, appeared that which dealt with another story of the sea, a story with a very different ending. It read:

The fishing schooner Three Brothers put into Atlantic City yesterday with the small cutter Sphinx in tow, and on board the latter was the dead body of a man, subsequently identified as Herbert W. Kyrle, a rich, eccentric resident of Absecon, New Jersey.

The skipper of the Three Brothers reported that the cutter was sighted in the Atlantic about sixty miles off Cape May. The vessel was coming up with the wind, and then falling off in a way that plainly showed she was not under control. Glasses revealed a motionless figure in the cockpit. The schooner ran alongside—and, to the horror of the skipper and the crew, the derelict's sole occupant was a man who had been dead for several days. The helm was loosely lashed, and a package of cigarettes was scattered about the cockpit.

Everything indicated that death had come suddenly from paralysis or heart failure when the lone yachtsman was sailing his pleasure craft. The skipper recognized the cutter as hailing from Atlantic City waters. The prevailing westerly and northwesterly winds would account for the presence of the craft where she was picked up.

The identity of the victim was established by means of letters and a pocketbook. He was little known in Atlantic City, being something of a recluse at his home in Absecon, known as The Rosery. He lived practically the life of a hermit, so far as visitors from the outside world were concerned. His only relaxation was sailing his boat, and it was his custom usually



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Manufacturers of Walk-Overs for Men and Women.
Campello (Brockton) Mass.

500 **"Dope" Model**

to go out in her in the evening. There are reports that he was occasionally visited by a very handsome and distinguished looking woman, who is said to have been his wife.

The body was examined by Dr. Delbar, the acting Coroner's physician, and under his direction it was removed to the morgue.

TWO people among the millions who read that piece of news were deeply interested in it. One of the two was Rice. In a spare hour between breakfast and luncheon he read a newspaper. First, he shook his head regretfully over the Narragansett item; but his thin, shrewd face grew bewildered when he reached the suggested solution of the Atlantic City mystery.

"Queer thing!" he muttered. "It's enough to give one the creeps. Now, am I to show this to Mr. Claude, or am I not? He's in a better temper this mornin'; but, like as not, he'll get mad again if I go rakin' up matters he wants to forget."

Still, being a faithful soul, he was willing to risk his employer's displeasure in that same employer's behalf; so he laid the newspaper before Waverton when the latter was lighting an after-luncheon cigar.

"Have you read that, Sir?" he asked.

Waverton took the paper, glanced through the paragraph indicated, and looked up. "It's a curious sort of event," he said; "but how does it specially concern me?"

Then Rice was more surprised than ever. "The address, Mr. Claude!" he almost whispered. "The Rosery, Absecon, New Jersey—where Mrs. Delamar lives!"

Waverton threw the newspaper on a table with a gesture of disdain. "Now, if you had told me Mrs. Delamar was found in that cutter, you would have done me a real good turn," he said.

Rice could make neither head nor tail of the remark, unless what he half suspected was true,—that Claude Waverton was heartily tired of Mrs. Delamar, and bitterly regretted the sorrow and scandal she had brought into his life. But, in that case, why were Mrs. Waverton's timid overtures for reconciliation rejected? Rice gave it up. There were points about the Waverton di-



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OLD COINS WANTED \$7.75 paid for rare quarter of 1853 without arrows; \$20.00 for half dollar. Keep money dated before 1890, and send 10c for new Coin Value Book.

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The baby shown above, daughter of B. E. Messner, a prominent druggist of Athens, Pa., gained 15 pounds in three months, on

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Baby's future welfare depends on his present development. Don't let your little one "drag along" day after day without showing signs of improvement, when it is so easy to get the right food.

The trial costs nothing. Sign and mail this coupon, and we will send 10 feedings of Eskay's Food and our helpful book "How to Care for the Baby."

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Send chest measure.

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Smallest space sold, 4 lines—largest, 12 lines.
No fakes or extravagant copy accepted.

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SALESMAN WANTED

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voice that were incomprehensible, and the more he pondered them the less he understood them.

THE other person who scanned the day's news with relish was James Leander Steingall, inspector in charge of the New York Detective Bureau, who, in the opinion of his devoted spouse, was unduly thoughtful as he asked for a second helping of kidneys and bacon that Sunday morning. Whoever suggested "Leander" as a euphonious name to be interposed between "James" and "Steingall" had gone rather by sound than sense; for no one more unlike the lovelorn youth who swam the Hellespont once too often could possibly be imagined than the burly inspector. He was a big, roundly built man, bullet-headed, close-cropped, with round eyes, round limbs, and a huge fist that closed in a ball. Presumably, even in infancy, these characteristics were latent but decipherable.

But his eyes were very blue and highly intelligent, and his lips could wrinkle into a kindly though somewhat inscrutable smile, and his better half knew that some weighty question was troubling his active brain as he lingered over the one meal in the week that he could enjoy at leisure.

Sunday morning's breakfast was Mrs. Steingall's special time for learning those little tidbits of New York's life with which the public is never regaled. Even in a criminal trial of the utmost notoriety there are side issues known to the authorities that are not allowed to appear in print. If Mrs. Steingall had kept a diary, and had jotted down therein everything she was told on fifty-two Sundays in the year during the last twenty years, she could have produced a book that would break the record in sales, and keep the courts busy for months.

She was far too wise a wife to seek direct information. Taking her turn at the newspaper, she read the Narragansett "sensation." "I shouldn't be at all astonished if those two came together again," she said.

"Which two?" inquired the great man, carefully cutting the end off a cigar.

"Mr. Waverton and his wife, of course."

"Why? Because he saved the baby?"

"Well, isn't it the strangest coincidence you ever read?"

"Coincidences are always strange. If they were not, we shouldn't notice them."

"But he cannot be such a bad man as was represented in court."

"Oh, come now, Jane! There are scores of convicts in Sing Sing today who would have done as much for a stranger's child."

"Still, this affair is wonderful. He practically went from the train to the ocean, and jumped in after the little girl; though there was a strong tide running, and he could use only one arm."

"You have missed the real coincidence, my dear," said Steingall, and his blue eyes twinkled.

"What is that?"

"Read the message from Atlantic City—about a dead man found in a boat."

Mrs. Steingall read. "It is horrible," she announced; "but what has it to do with the Waverton divorce?"

"I am just wondering. Herbert W. Kyrle of Absecon is Mrs. Delamar's husband."

"Jim, you don't say so!"

"I am not on oath, my dear; but I am speaking to the best of my belief."

"Of all the amazing things!" vowed Mrs. Steingall. "What do you make of it?"

"Nothing—at present," and Steingall went out into a strip of garden, where some clumps of sweet peas were battling vigorously against the strenuous climate of Brooklyn. Having satisfied himself as to their progress, he returned to the house and telephoned headquarters.

"Clancy been in yet?" he inquired.

"No, Sir," said a subordinate.

"When he shows up ask him to come and lunch with me here."

SO it came to pass that while Rice the valet in Providence was searching his wits to account for the oddity of Claude Waverton's giving such little heed to the mention of Mrs. Delamar's New Jersey address in the record of the Atlantic City tragedy, the two cleverest detectives in New York were discussing the same problem, though with more knowledge, and from a widely different viewpoint.

To be continued next Sunday

DEDICATED TO DRAMATIC ART

Continued from page 10

long nose, when there stood before him a bent figure he could not recognize in the fog. It held its left hand about its throat and coughed.

"You got to let me in, Zhulik!" spoke a rasping voice.

Zhulik recognized Yekl. "My God! what are you doing here?" he exclaimed, taking the trembling figure by the arm and leading him to the stage. "You ought to be in bed on this wet night."

"In bed or not in bed, what's the difference? I can't sleep. Something don't let me sleep," cried Yekl, his voice shrill but weak.

Zhulik walked him into Herr Knobel's dressing room.

"I can't stand it no more," whimpered Yekl. "They are ruining Herr Knobel. I feel it in my bones. What's to become of him without me?"

He removed the calico curtains from the closets where the costumes were hung. He fingered them with a loving, sensitive hand, murmuring to himself, shaking his head as if sorry for them. There they were, the habiliments of Kings and Princes; but how altered! The loving care he had bestowed upon them was obliterated by the patches of unskilful hands.

Zhulik sought to persuade him to return home; but he seemed possessed with a feverish, uncanny determination to bring order out of the chaos. He pleaded with Zhulik, caressed him, placed his emaciated hands upon the lapels of his coat, and his eyes filled with tears.

"I want when Herr Knobel comes back from the road," said Yekl wistfully, "that he finds all his costumes in good order. And then you tell him who done it for him, and maybe—"

HERR KNOBEL being on the road, Zhulik did not return to the theater until the next evening after the performance had begun. As he entered the dressing room he remembered Yekl. The costumes were scattered on the floor. There were pieces of cloth strewn about. He saw Yekl's hat in one corner, his coat in another. He walked over anxiously to one of the closets. Huddled in one corner lay Yekl, apparently asleep in his shirt sleeves.

"Wake up, Yekl!" he shouted, shaking the inanimate form.

But Yekl did not wake up.

Zhulik turned him over. In his hand he clutched a needle. On his middle finger was a thimble. His lips were blood stained. His eyes were wide open, but motionless.

Zhulik, all in a tremor, rushed out of the room. They were playing the first act of the operetta. The orchestra was leading the chorus of men and women, who were singing lustily. The stage manager pranced about the back of the setting, preparing to strike the scene. Zhulik shouted to him:

"Come in here! I must see you at once!"

The curtain descended, and with a rush the stage manager and his assistants pounced upon the scene and took it apart. The chorus people were leaving the stage to rest between the acts. Zhulik waved his arms to them:

"For God's sake, someone get a doctor!"

One of the chorus men went out to telephone for a doctor. When he arrived he said that Yekl had been dead for sometime.

As Zhulik sat in Herr Knobel's dressing room, alone with the body, he heard the opening chorus of the second act. The Yiddish theater world rolled on without its devotee.

SUN AS AN ARTIST

THERE is a wide variety in the pace at which the sun can give a color or change it. A winter apple may be a month in reaching its ruddiness, a peach may take only one week to flush into its mantle of maturity; but the most nimble work of the solar ray in its decoration of fruit and flower is not to be compared with what it accomplishes in other departments. When its power was brought to bear upon some familiar chemicals, it was found that its action was reduced from days to seconds.

Upon this discovery turn all the wonders of photography. At first silver nitrate—or lunar caustic, as it was commonly called—was used in the camera. From time to time other substances of greater and greater sensitivity to light have been produced, every one of them successively giving the solar beam a wider play and more astonishing power.

Today, with the exposure of a photographic plate, not only are the beatings of an insect's wings caught in the camera, but also the path of a cannonball, the skyward flight of exploded rock, and the sinuous glint of lightning.

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into my eyes and a catch into my throat. No man who has not been honored by a great crowd of people, by a congressional district, can ever realize clearly what that emotion is. It is a mingling of proud happiness and humble gratitude that comes from no other situation, so far as I know.

For the next month my life was a misery. I remember one evening, after I had delivered what I considered to be a highly polished and eloquent utterance on patriotism before a crowd of old soldiers, that I asked my wife on the way from the hall what she had thought of the speech.

"As a man," she said frankly, "you are fairly sensible and interesting; but the minute you get up on a platform you are utterly hopeless. There is something forced and strained about you. You not only don't succeed, but it's painful to watch you."

I said nothing more until we reached our room in the hotel. Then I sank down into an armchair, put my elbows on my knees and my face in my hands, and groaned aloud.

"I shall never be able to do it!" I said sadly. "There's no use talking. It will simply kill me. The physical strain and the nervous effort will break me down."

"Well," she replied, "you've gone into this thing, and you've got to go through with it. You can't make a campaign without making speeches."

"I think I'll announce," I suggested, "that I will not make any speeches, that the time for oratory in politics has passed, and that what a candidate should do is to circulate quietly among his constituents and learn to know their wishes and needs."

Of course I did not do that. I had to go on and learn by hard knocks. My newspaper friend had told me that it was suicidal to read a speech from manuscript. I stuck to my first rule of writing out the speech beforehand, learning it by heart, and then delivering it as if inspired. I developed tremendous speed in this way. My anxiety to sit down was such that my vocal chords responded in great shape. After awhile, when I thought I was doing fairly well, I invited my friend to hear me speak at a neighboring town. I shall never forget his wretched look after that event.

"John," he said, "there are so many things to talk about that I don't know where to begin. But I'm going to tell you this at the outset: Never make a speech without starting it by complimenting the town in which you're speaking. No man can be a successful speaker unless he does that. You've got to run in the stuff about the 'fair city.'"

"I won't do it," I objected. "I will not descend to that claptrap and balderdash. Besides, that sort of thing is what all these bum speakers do."

"I don't care about that," he continued. "I wouldn't go to hear a man, any man, if I thought he wouldn't say something nice about my town. He owes that much to his audience. He ought to come that far across the footlights, and do that much to make himself one of the crowd. You can't make a speech go without that 'fair city' talk."

Unless you have thought that over, this may seem strange to you; but my friend was right. And tonight, if I were going to make a speech in New York or Chicago, I should probably begin it thus:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, before I touch the subject which has brought us together this evening, I cannot resist the temptation to tell you how I love the atmosphere, the people, and the ideals of New York (or Chicago), and with what infinite pleasure I always visit you," and so forth, and so forth.

That sort of thing cannot be dispensed with. It is one of the old reliables of public speaking.

ANOTHER thing my teacher told me was this:

"Always, before ending your speech, say, 'And now, in conclusion,' and thus make a brief ending." "That's too much," I said, "and I can't do it. It sounds like a funeral or a sermon."

He insisted on it so strongly that I asked him to give me some reason for it. He did, as follows:

"It's this way: In the course of your speech you give one fellow an idea, and his attention runs off with that, and you give another fellow another idea, and his mind gallops off with that. In that way everybody is mulling over a different idea, because no mind can take and assimilate all the ideas of a speech in the same time that it is spoken. When you break off without giving everybody notice, they all get mad. It's like waking a lot of people up and expecting them to thank you. But, if you say, 'And now, in conclusion,' you warn the audience that you are about to stop, they all come back and join your final sentences with their wandering wits, and the whole thing winds up happily. That's how you get the applause and make them think they have been right with you all through the speech."

He was right about that too. That "And now, in conclusion," is something I always use. I would as soon think of leaving that out of a speech as I would think of not brushing my hair in the morning.

ANOTHER lesson in oratory I got from a stage driver. He and I became very friendly in a drive across country, and he promised to come and hear my speech. That man went through the most peculiar process during my remarks that I had ever seen. He entered the hall keyed up to the greatest interest, and he sat erect and gave me his undivided attention during the first half of the speech. After that he wilted like a flower. Naturally, this annoyed me greatly. After it was over I asked him to explain why he had not liked the speech.

"Because," he explained frankly, "I was always lucky in getting the benefit of brutal frankness,—you know nothing at all about how to make a public speech. You don't know how to manufacture applause."

With that I caught him by both shoulders and clung

to him like a shipwrecked man hanging to a spar. "That's it!" I exclaimed. "That's what I want to know! How do you manufacture applause? Just tell me that, and you can have anything I've got!"

"You don't end your sentences right," he explained. "You begin a sentence with the name of a great man, follow that up with what he did, and then close with why he did it. That's all backward. Begin with what he did, say why he did it, and then slap in his name as the last word—after which you kindly keep silent in an expectant attitude so that the audience may get in their applause without inconveniencing you. The recipe for applause is to end the sentence with George Washington, Lincoln, or William McKinley, and then wait. You don't get the applause, but the names and the reputations and the sacredness of those famous men whom everybody knows do the work for you."

I was a humble beginner, and I took all advice. I did what he told me, and I got the applause, which I had never done before.

THOSE are merely examples of what I learned about public speaking. It is amazing to the layman to find out how much there is to learn about this art. You learn it by degrees, speech after speech and day after day.

Another peculiar thing in this connection is the manner in which you learn to have stage presence. When you first begin the terrific business of placing your form and your face in the view of thousands of people, you know that they are looking at you; but you don't want them to do it. "I'm a very ordinary sort of person," you tell yourself, "and I can't see why they want to stare at me." Then, in a few days, you find yourself ordering your attitude and facial expression along a certain line.

When you have got to the point where you can look about calmly without blushing and can persuade yourself that you are neither awkward nor uncouth, you are beginning to become hardened to the constant stare of many eyes. And soon you find yourself sitting down or getting up with easy grace, and while you are seated instinctively adopting attitudes that convey the idea of towering mentality, unbounded patriotism, and impervious dignity. At least, if you don't get away with all this, you think you do, and that helps you to make a strong speech.

A LOT has been written to show that the new Congressman who goes to Washington arrives there puffed up with the idea of his own importance and wisdom. Such is not the case at all. I know that, from my own experience and from the experiences of many others. The conscientious, sensible Congressman never becomes unduly inflated with the idea of his own bigness. For one thing, he is too common an article of furniture in Washington for anybody to take any particular notice of him. In the second place, unless he loses all perspective, he never forgets that he is dependent on the votes of the people at home.

But it is a big job, after all. A man represents the people and the interests of a big section of the country, and is expected and does try to work for the welfare of the entire nation. It has been my observation that any member of the House who is given a chance, or can make a chance, to reform or improve some branch of the Government, and to accomplish really beneficial results, buckles down to his job and works like a farmhand. Most of such work is done in silence and in the obscurity of the committee room. It is actuated by patriotism and by the desire to do good work. But the appreciation of his value as a worker never obliterates his knowledge that he works by suffrage.

I was once walking down Pennsylvania-ave. with Albert J. Beveridge, who was then a Senator from Indiana. I was looking for information, and asked him how a man set about becoming President of the United States.

"A man gets to be President," Beveridge explained, "by painting his personality on a cloud and then floating in on the public's imagination."

That sounded witty and like a half-truth to me then, but now I know that it was wrong. You can get to the presidency, proportionately speaking, just as you can get to Congress, and that is by doing honest work and winning the confidence of the people. Here is something I learned long ago:

This country is governed by the two or three men who sit on the porch after sundown, put their feet on the railing, smoke their pipes, and cuss and discuss everybody in the neighborhood, including the parson and the newspaper editor. You often see it claimed that the country editor is the biggest power in community politics. But even the editor is subservient to those two or three leading citizens—they may be the county clerk, the county treasurer, and a friend of theirs—who really control and dominate the entire locality. They know everything that's going on, from the death of Sam Jones' cow to the political ambitions of young John Henry. You get next to those fellows, and you will go to Congress as long as they stand by you, and just so long as they are in harmony with the dominant sentiment in their locality,—the sentiment of the farmer, the clerk, and the hired man.

WHEN I went into the game, I did not appreciate fully how well informed and how highly intelligent the average citizen of this country is. I found it out soon enough to escape disaster; but many others were not so lucky. By my work in my own district and by my travels all over the country I have found this out: If you will walk across the street in Tombstone, Arizona, and join the group you see on the veranda, or if you mingle with the crowd at the crossroads store at Podunk Gap, you will learn that those people know all about current events and have formed their own opinions on

Continued on page 16

NO OTHER WAY

BY GORDON HOLMES

Author of "A Mysterious Disappearance," "The De Bercy Affair," "The Late Tenant," Etc.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS

CLAUDE G. WAVERTON, a rich young New Yorker, became so dissolute that his wife Doris was forced to get a divorce, which was just at the time he was seriously injured in an automobile accident at Palm Beach, Florida. He recovered at the Asphodel House, where he was attended by a woman of unsavory reputation, known as Mrs. Josephine Delamar. On his return to the North, Waverton's friends were astounded at the change in him; for he had dropped all his riotous habits and become a sober, respectable man. He saved his own child from drowning at Narragansett Pier; then spurned his wife's efforts to bring about a reconciliation and departed.

Herbert W. Kyrle of Absecon, New Jersey, Mrs. Delamar's husband, was found dead (supposedly from heart failure) in a cutter off Cape May. James Leander Steingall, inspector in charge of the New York Detective Bureau, and C. F. Clancy, his chief assistant, instantly took up the case.

CHAPTER III.

Wherein a Detective Is Puzzled and Admits It

USUALLY, that repository of secrets, the police headquarters at the corner of Grand and Center-sts., has too many irons in the fire to permit of its experts engaging in work that is not imperatively called for; but, as it happened, "the beautiful Mrs. Delamar"—a descriptive phrase by which that lively lady generally figured in gossip-mongering newspapers—was one of those social meteors whose irregular orbits attract the attention of the police. There are always a score or more of such sirens kept under unobtrusive surveillance. Some among them are dames actually moving in good society, some call themselves actresses,—by no means hard-working members of an honorable profession, but masqueraders of the stage,—some are known to the public only by reason of their striking appearance and ultrafashionable attire; but, one and all, they are adventuresses, and the New York Detective Bureau seldom errs in regarding them as potential criminals. And certain members of it had a particular interest in Mrs. Delamar.

Officially, unless requested to make an arrest by other municipal police authorities or federal officials, the New York Detective Bureau has no interest except in crimes committed within the city limits. But some members of the bureau have been known to take a very active interest in affairs that could not possibly be included in their regular duties. Various powerful influences have had no difficulty in securing the aid of the department in matters of which there is no official record and in which the Detective Bureau could have no concern.

The head of the bureau had received a "request"—really it was as patent as a direct command—from a source that it was believed could make and unmake police officials, to find out if Mrs. Delamar could not be placed in a position where she could be dangerous to no one. She had been concerned in a certain financial matter of great moment, and it was feared that she knew enough to be exceedingly dangerous. It was highly important that she should be "silenced," with never the remotest suggestion of the real reason for it, and to this end unlimited expense money was available to avoid subsequent official curiosity about vouchers.

And this is the reason why, after reading the two apparently unrelated sensations in the newspaper, Steingall sent for Clancy.

A couple of long-distance calls elicited two new facts,—the inquest on the man found dead on board the derelict cutter would be held at Atlantic City on Wednesday, and Claude Waverton and his valet had left Narragansett Pier hurriedly on Saturday afternoon.

"Where have they gone to?" asked Steingall, who was in communication with the chief of police at Narragansett.

"We have not troubled to ascertain," came the answer.

"Will you kindly find out, and let me know?" he said.

An hour later he heard that Waverton had gone to Newport and thence to Providence, with the added item, born of official suspiciousness, that, whereas Waverton had stated definitely that he meant to pay a

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"You Won't Think It Rude if I Take a Cigar and Simply Sniff It?"

prolonged visit to the Rhode Island resort, he had cleared out, bag and baggage, within a few hours of his arrival.

"Nothing in that, I fancy," said Steingall to Clancy. "I suppose he hardly expected to meet his wife there, especially in the same hotel; so he settled the difficulty by going at once."

"At any rate, that is where the chase begins," said his colleague.

"Just at the moment I don't see why."

"Isn't Waverton the man most likely to give reliable data as to Mrs. Delamar's whereabouts during the last month?"

"Well, yes," and the chief laughed.

Clancy took a broken cigar from his waistcoat pocket and sniffed it. He did not smoke; but he enjoyed the fragrance of good tobacco, and Steingall, who was partial to cigars of the best brands, kept him supplied with the wherewithal to gratify a peculiar taste—though it cut the confirmed smoker to the quick every time he saw a fine Havana ruthlessly crushed in Clancy's wiry fingers.

"I can do little in Atlantic City or Absecon till Wednesday," said Clancy, cracking the dried leaves as he passed them to and fro beneath his nostrils. "The New Jersey men will have destroyed every particle of evidence. Oh, if I had only been on board the Three Brothers when that yacht was picked up! If I had been given one glimpse of that man's body before it was disturbed! The scattered cigarettes! What they might have told!"

"You will be able to smell them, anyhow."

"More than you could do, Steingall. Your olfactory nerves are poisoned and atrophied by clouds of smoke."

"Well, have another highball. Sunday afternoon, you know."

"No, thanks. I must be off now. When I reach Providence I must be primed with Claude G. Waverton's history, and I hardly gave an eye to the suit when it was before the courts."

The two shook hands, and Clancy jerked himself out of the house and into a streetcar.

It was certainly Nature's love of opposites that not only brought Steingall and Clancy together in the Detective Bureau, but united them in the bonds of a great friendship. The chief inspector weighed exactly twice as much as his diminutive aide, and Steingall was massive and reposeful as Clancy was small and excitable. Steingall was half Anglo-Saxon, half Teuton; Clancy, though his name seemed to betoken Irish descent, was

really more than half a Frenchman. The one had a genius for analyzing evidence, the other possessed an almost uncanny gift of reading and following each twist and kink of a criminal intelligence. Apart, they were highly dangerous to the undiscovered felon: when they worked together the evildoer was, indeed, in a parlous state. And more than one head would have tossed on a sleepless pillow that night were it known that the "Big Fellow" and the "Little Fellow" of the bureau were already leagued in inquiry into the seemingly trivial complexities of the Waverton divorce.

CLANCY reached Providence soon after daybreak; so he lounged about until the hour grew reasonable.

Then he breakfasted at the hotel that housed Waverton, and thought fit to interview Rice before seeking audience of Rice's employer. Being well versed in the ways of the upper-class servant, he refrained, almost ostentatiously, from making any attempt to pump the valet as to his master's affairs.

"I have come from New York to have a word or two with Mr. Waverton," he explained affably. "I don't wish to disturb him at too early an hour. Shall I send up my card now, or wait a little?"

"Well, Sir, it all depends—" began Rice.

Clancy opened his cardcase. "Now you will understand," he said confidentially, yet without overdoing the display of candor. "Of course, being Mr. Waverton's constant companion in his travels, you will have followed recent events with interest, and I may tell you that Mrs. Delamar's husband was found dead on Saturday under somewhat suspicious circumstances."

"So that there Mr. Kyrle was her husband!" blurted out Rice in his surprise. But he recovered his wits instantly, and went on more guardedly, "If you will pardon me, Sir, I don't quite grasp—"

"How it concerns Mr. Claude Waverton? Well, the lady need not commit bigamy now, for one thing. For another, one wonders how much Mr. and Mrs. Kyrle have been in each other's company of late. I don't know,—I am only guessing,—but it is reasonable to suppose that Mr. Waverton can speak pretty accurately as to Mrs. Delamar's whereabouts during the last month."

Obviously, the detective was giving, not asking for, information. It was a new experience for Rice. In his heart of hearts he regarded Clancy as a babbler, a truly dangerous person to be intrusted with official secrets. Still, human nature being what it is, he could not bring himself to stop this rill of scandal. Up went his right

hand to his lips, while his left passed under imaginary swallowtails. In a word, Rice was about to make an important pronouncement.

"Of course Mr. Claude will say what he thinks fit," he murmured discreetly; "but I happen to be aware that he has not set eyes on the lady since we came back from Florida."

"Ah, that is what you think," and Clancy dug Rice genially in the ribs; "but you are not Mr. Waverton's shadow, eh? He may have met her every day in New York, or elsewhere, without your being the wiser."

"Not at all, Sir, not at all! Don't you believe it! My master is a changed man since his accident. Really, if I hadn't been with him regular durin' the past seven years, I'd—well, I hardly know how to put it. But I'll take my oath he has done with Mrs. Delamar for good and all. Why, it was only yesterday—"

Then Rice hesitated. He was undoubtedly a level-headed fellow, and it suddenly dawned on him that, for some unaccountable reason, he was emulating this garrulous little detective in talkativeness.

"Exactly," said Clancy quietly. "But Mr. Waverton and you yourself noticed the paragraph in the newspapers, and the address was bound to catch your eye."

"Well, 'aving said so much, I may as well finish. It was I who showed the hitem to Mr. Claude, an' 'e said 'e only wished it was Mrs. Delamar instead of 'er 'usband who 'ad been found on board that cutter. An' 'e didn't say 'er 'usband' neether. 'E didn't seem to know who Mr. Kyrle was."

Rice's sudden loss of aspirates betrayed the measure of his annoyance, for he was now thoroughly vexed with himself; yet he did not realize until long afterward that Clancy managed to soothe him with a few well chosen words.

"A very creditable remark, Mr. Rice," and the detective turned to admire an old print of Bunker Hill hanging in the lobby where the two were talking. "That woman has caused far too much mischief and suffering for any honest man to continue to be fascinated by her. And I have no doubt that Mr. Waverton is a good-hearted fellow; a bit weak, but sound at the core. Pity he was not wise to Mrs. Delamar's game a little sooner; but it is never too late to mend, eh? Well, now, when can I see him? Our bit of chatter is just by the way, and means nothing. I need hardly remind you that I have spoken freely because you are a trusted servant; indeed, one might almost say, a friend of the family."

Nevertheless, the valet felt like a cat whose fur has been stroked the wrong way when he brought Clancy's card to Waverton, and he scarcely noticed that the latter held the bit of pasteboard a long time between finger and thumb before saying:

"Show Mr. Clancy in, Rice."

NOW, the old Claude Waverton would surely have exclaimed, "What in blank does the idiot want?" and garnished the phrase with a strenuous denunciation of the Detective Bureau in general and "Mr. C. F. Clancy" in particular; whereas, this later attitude might well betoken a real sense of the seriousness, if not the active anxiety, that attached itself to a visit from such a personage. But Rice, flurried and doubting, was only too glad to receive a placid order, and ushered the detective into the room with due ceremony.

"I hope I have not made too early a call, Sir," said Clancy, openly recognizing the fact that Waverton was in his dressing gown and breakfasting.

"I don't care a red cent so long as you have not come to arrest me!" was the surprising answer.

"Arrest you! Good gracious! what for?"

"That is for you to say. If it is about that baby,—about Kathleen,—I didn't push her into the sea. She fell in, and I jumped after her. I can call a dozen witnesses, including a man with a telescope."

"A telescope?"

"Yes. The manager of the hotel told me that some fellow was watching me as I strolled down the pier, and saw the whole performance."

"How very interesting! It reminds me of an incident that occurred on the Maine coast some years ago. A reporter had occasion to telephone to a lighthouse that was cut off from the mainland by a causeway covered at half tide, and when he was talking to the lighthouse keeper's wife he heard her despairing cries at seeing her husband drowned before her eyes in an attempt to cross from the shore through a breaking sea."

"Gee whizz! Did he, though? Glad this person with the telescope didn't have quite a similar experience. Have you come from New York, Mr. Clancy? Will you have some breakfast?"

"I arrived on the morning train; so I have been killing time by sightseeing and eating. My errand is simple enough—but first let me congratulate you on your gallant and truly fortunate deed at Narragansett Pier. The newspapers are full of it."

"I assure you I was present by the merest chance. I had not the slightest notion that Mrs. Waverton was staying there, or I should certainly have chosen some other locality for my rest cure. Well, why are you here? There is a woman in the case, of course."

"Yes, Sir—the woman."

"And what of her?"

"Mrs. Delamar's real name is Josephine Kyrle. The man who was found dead in an open boat, drifting about the sea some sixty miles from Atlantic City was her husband."

"I guessed as much."

"Ah! Didn't you know?"

"I have never betrayed the slightest curiosity as to the existence, or fate, of the late Mr. Delamar, or Kyrle."

"But you knew that some such person existed?"

Waverton waited a second or two before he answered. "Not until my man Rice showed me the paragraph in

the newspapers yesterday morning. Even then, it was a surmise, a guess, as I have put it."

"When did you last see Mrs. Delamar?"

Again Waverton paused; but this time his hesitancy might be explained by an effort of memory. "I think I am right in saying that I met her by appointment a week ago last Friday."

"In New York?"

"Yes."

Now, for some reason, it was the detective who abandoned the quick thrust and parry of question and answer; but his amazingly bright and piercing black eyes dwelt inquiringly on Waverton's steel-gray eyes, and Waverton laughed angrily.

"You, I suppose, like the rest of the world, are aware that I have lived the life of a first-rate fool during the last few years," he went on, suddenly thrusting aside the breakfast tray, and taking a pipe from the mantelpiece. "Well, it will help elucidate my position if I tell you that the knock on the head I got on the rocks at Palm Beach befogged my wits in some respects but cleared them in others. Have you ever heard that experienced hypnotists can cause cataleptic subjects to simulate varying emotions by merely pressing on certain nerve centers? That is just my case. Those rocks pressed my skull rather severely, and perhaps affected certain convolutions of my brain permanently. At any rate, I came to the conclusion, when I regained my senses,—the new set, I mean,—that the less I saw of Mrs. Delamar in the future the better it would be for my own peace of mind."

"Did the—er—lady take the suggestion kindly?" said Clancy, when the other was filling the pipe.

"By no means. So I offered a golden bridge. It seems I won about twenty-five thousand dollars before leaving Boynton on the night of the accident, and I gave her the wad. It is a slang expression, but terse, and it suits a sizable roll of greenbacks."

"And the meeting in New York?" prompted the little man quietly.

"Took place in the grillroom of the Waldorf-Astoria. The lady was discreetly pathetic; but I was adamant—one can do that sort of thing without unnecessary effort in a crowded grillroom."

"Have you ever lived in the tropics, Mr. Waverton?" asked Clancy suddenly.

Waverton was lighting the pipe, and he concluded the operation before replying. "Is that a delicate allusion to Palm Beach—or Boynton? It is pretty hot in both places at times," he said, with a laugh.

Clancy laughed too. He rose. Obviously, the curious intrusion of a query as to Waverton's foreign experiences was of no real interest to him.

I AM sorry to have inflicted my presence on you at this inconvenient hour," he said; "but I need hardly explain that we men of the bureau pry and peer in the most unlikely places for clues, or suggestions, or motives, while following up an inquiry of this sort—which, of course, may have a perfectly natural and straightforward explanation. I may take it, I am sure, that you know practically nothing of Mrs. Delamar's life or conduct since you left her house at Palm Beach?"

Waverton too stood up. "Practically nothing," he repeated. "Is it too early to suggest a highball?"

"Yes, Sir; but if I may have a cigar—"

"Certainly. Try one of these."

He placed a box on the table. Clancy noticed that he lifted it with his left hand. Waverton saw that the detective smiled.

"What is amusing you?" he asked.

"I was wondering what you would think of my queer way of treating a cigar. I do not smoke; but I like the smell of tobacco."

"I don't understand."

"You won't think it rude of me if I take a cigar and simply sniff it?"

"Of course not. Every man to his taste; though yours is a peculiar one."

"And, by the way, Mr. Waverton, when you met Mrs. Delamar last Friday, had she written to you?"

"Yes. You want the address, I suppose?"

"It would oblige me greatly."

Waverton unlocked a leather box that lay on a side table, and searched among some papers. "Here you are," he said, producing a letter. He glanced through it. "Would you care to see the contents? They are brief, and eminently—noncommittal, shall I say?"

Clancy took the letter, and examined it with a slowness that was surprising in a man usually so alert and decisive.

"Thank you," he said. "Allow me to apologize once more. Good morning."

"One word before you go. I have been rather too much in the limelight of late, and—er—"

"I see no reason whatsoever why your name should figure in this inquiry," said Clancy gravely.

When the door had closed on him, Waverton laid aside the pipe. "I must be cultivating nerves," he muttered. "What the dickens did that fellow mean by asking if I had ever lived in the tropics, and then dropping it as suddenly?"

Then he rang for Rice, and bade the valet order a fresh breakfast, as the eatables had gone cold.

MEANWHILE, Clancy had consulted a railway folder. He found that he could go on to Narragansett Pier, pass a couple of hours in that charming seaside town, and return to New York in the evening. He had time to visit police headquarters before taking the train. On the way he amused himself by jotting down the exact text of the note written by Mrs. Delamar. It ran:

DEAR CLO-CLO.—Do give me half an hour, somewhere, any day, but soon. Yours ever, FEENA.

"Clo-Clo"—his pet name, no doubt," mused the detective. "And his sporty friends call him 'Curly.' I wonder why? Now, he strikes me as the sort of man who doesn't quite answer to either 'Clo-Clo' or 'Curly.' Must be on the principle of the old maid who called her black cat 'Snowball.'"

At Narragansett, by being even more daringly confidential with the manager of the hotel than he was with Rice, Clancy soon ascertained every scrap of fact and fancy attached to Claude Waverton's brief visit. Especially was he interested in the singular experience of John Stratton Tearle, who, when seated in the veranda, had watched Waverton's remarkable rescue of his own child from drowning.

As the detective was in Narragansett during the luncheon hour, it was an easy matter to have a good look at the telescope-using stranger, a well set up, handsome man of the stockbroker type; but, oddly enough, Clancy did not enter the dining room himself, protesting to the hospitable manager that he felt compelled to look up some friends in the town.

He made no great effort to find them, however. After a brief scrutiny of the hotel register, he loitered about the promenade. He was even beginning to look at his watch, when his patience was rewarded by seeing Tearle, who was smoking in his favorite veranda, rise quickly from a chair, and lift his hat to two women who came out of the hotel and entered a waiting carriage.

The three chatted with the ease of old friends, until a Normandy nurse appeared, leading a little girl by the hand. When these two had been safely disposed in the carriage, the coachman drove off, and the vehicle happened to pass the seat that held Clancy's small body.

"The wife, the sister, the baby, the nurse, and the villain," said he.

Then he turned his back on Narragansett; and, as Mrs. Daunt's coachman was a most respectable man, it may safely be assumed that the detective was not thinking of him when ticking off the five persons of whose identity he had taken stock before bidding farewell to the sunlit Atlantic.

IT was his custom, when opportunity served, to pass an hour at night in Steingall's sanctum at Center-st. There, high above the neighboring buildings, looking out over a lamp-spangled vista of downtown New York, the two men who knew more of the city's secrets than any others then living would discuss the day's events.

As it happened, late as it was Steingall was in when Clancy tapped at the door, and he thrust aside a pile of papers with a sigh of relief.

"Well—any results?" he asked.

"I really don't know," said Clancy, seating himself on the edge of a chair and placing his hands on his knees. That was his characteristic attitude. He seemed to be always ready for a sudden spring in pursuit of either a malefactor or a theory. Steingall used to chaff him by pretending to believe that he slept in that same pose in a specially constructed bed.

"You did not wholly waste your day, I take it," went on the big man, pinching the end off a cigar.

"No. Before you light up, tell me what brand this is," and Clancy held out the cigar given him by Claude Waverton.

"It is a genuine Havana,—not the export type; but the sort of smoke the planters themselves like," said the chief inspector, after a close examination.

"I thought so. An acquired taste, I believe?"

"Yes. Cubans and South Americans affect them, and buy them even here."

"But this lively member of the Four Hundred is neither a Cuban nor an Argentine."

"He can't be."

"He was a drunkard, a *bon vivant*, a first-nighter at theaters, and a frequenter of boxing clubs?"

"Exactly."

"But the man I have seen has never indulged to excess in anything, unless it was hard work."

"How do you mean—the man you have seen?"

"I interviewed Claude Waverton at Providence, and the impression he left on me was of a young New Yorker who had roughed it in the West, either as a miner or cowpuncher and, having succeeded to a good estate, was now settling down into the quiet dignity of country life."

"You must try again, Clancy," laughed Steingall. "Claude Waverton has been bailed out of the night court at least three times. Once he narrowly escaped imprisonment for buckling up a bouncer at the Casino, and, when his nerves were steady three years ago, he had his automobile license withdrawn in this State. Why, man alive, there is no livelier spark in Manhattan than he at this minute!"

"He called it catalepsy," sniggered Clancy.

"Called what catalepsy?"

"The change, the transformation—puts it all down to a new bump on his cranium."

"Did you discuss the matter?"

"Yes, in a sort of a way. Odd thing! Don't understand it. It's the kind of conversion you read about in a Sunday school magazine, and I have always fancied that such things were the exclusive privileges of prizefighters and toughs. In any case, this has nothing to do with Mrs. Delamar and her dead hubby. The lady was in town last Friday week. She wrote to Waverton—called him 'Dear Clo-Clo.' Fancy that!"

"Why shouldn't she call him 'Clo-Clo,' or any other fool name she had a mind to? Bless me if I know what you are driving at!"

"I don't know myself what I am driving at, nor where I am being driven. There are elements in this business that would puzzle an analytical chemist, if it were possible to put human nature in a glass jar and resolve it as one tests lard. Have you ever heard of John Stratton

Tearle,—Wall Street style, tall, eyeglasses, gold-mounted cane, telescope, well manicured hands—which he doesn't chew."

Steingall smiled. The concluding words were a hit at his own habit of nibbling his nails when deep in thought. He unlocked a drawer in the desk, took out a small volume with indented index letters, and glanced through some of its pages.

"Not here," he said.

Clancy seemed to be disappointed. He leaned forward, picked up the cigar brought from Providence, and sniffed it eagerly.

"Suppose now you tell me what you have been doing," continued the chief good humoredly.

THE little man was deep in his narrative of the day's occurrences when a station Sergeant entered.

"Telephone message for you, Mr. Clancy," he said.

Clancy read the written slip:

Chief of police, Providence, telephoned Mr. Clancy, fifteen P. M.—Claude G. Waverton and valet left Providence for Boston.

He passed the paper across the table.

"Claude G. Waverton is evidently very anxious to get well away from Mrs. Delamar," he said dryly.

"You must have scared him stiff," commented Steingall. "Shall we 'phone Boston?"

"No need. We can find him easily when we want him."

"But—do we want him?"

"I think so. The Waverton suit has not ended. It is only just beginning. I am glad I went to Providence. I don't even regret Narragansett Pier. Have you ever seen Mrs. Waverton? Pretty woman, very. Tearle didn't look at her through a telescope—not he! Queer thing he should possess a telescope. Not one man in a hundred owns one. I wonder if he knows Mrs. Delamar? People who have telescopes usually squint through them at ships, boats, cutters, and craft of that sort."

"Ah!" said Steingall, and his blue eyes sparkled.

CHAPTER IV. Suicide or Murder?

AT Atlantic City, Clancy was faced by the unexpected.

In the first instance, a pale, beautiful, and singularly self-possessed widow was there to pay a belated tribute of respect to the memory of a husband whom she had neglected in life; and, in the second, it was discovered that the man in the boat had died from the effects of a virulent poison, and not, as was assumed at the outset, from heart disease.

By an accident that was not devoid of significance in the course taken later by events, Clancy chanced to be in the office of the local chief of police on the Tuesday evening when the doctor who had made this alarming discovery announced it in person.

He was a young man, fresh from the hospitals, and was acting as substitute for the long-established practitioner who officiated as Coroner's physician. When he entered the chief's private room none could guess from his cool and collected demeanor that he was the bearer of startling intelligence. He smiled pleasantly when the Atlantic City police officer said:

"Ah, Dr. Gilman, we were just speaking about you! This is Mr. C. F. Clancy, of the Detective Bureau, New York."

"Indeed!" The doctor's eyebrows curved with amiable astonishment. "Does New York think already, then, that our local mystery owns an importance beyond the ordinary?"

"Yes," said Clancy.

"But why? I have read every word that appeared in the newspapers—"

"We try to keep editors guessing at times."

The young medico realized that his inquiry concerning the attitude of the Detective Bureau had been deftly turned aside; but he only said:

"Yet I am puzzled. Frankly speaking, I had no idea that you people in New York were so sapient; for, as it happens, I am here tonight to make a statement that gives an unpleasant twist to the affair. Mr. Kyrle did not die from natural causes. He was poisoned!"

The local official started, and glanced darkly at Clancy; for not a word had the little man said of any ground for suspicion that the death of the cutter's owner was other than a mischance that might overtake any middle-aged man of sedentary habits and somewhat corpulent build.

But Clancy only smiled into the doctor's eyes. It suited his purposes to pretend occasionally to a knowledge he did not possess.

"What was the drug?" he asked.

"A rare one—crystals of nicotine. It is an irritant poison, and, owing to its deadly excitation of the heart, the symptoms may easily be mistaken for those of angina pectoris. In this instance, the fact that the dead man had undoubtedly been lying in the boat at least four days added to the difficulty of diagnosis. Therefore, although I had some suspicion of the truth from the first glance, I kept my opinions to myself until I was satisfied beyond doubt that an extraordinarily powerful dose of nicotine crystals in solution had been administered."

"In what kind of solution, Dr. Gilman?" said Clancy.

"In brandy, I believe; but that is nothing more than a well founded guess. I mean that brandy was found in the stomach; but whether it was partaken of about the same time as the poison, or used as an agent for disguising the exceedingly acrid and nauseous taste of the nicotine, I cannot be positive."

"You are prepared to vouch for the result of your analysis?" said Clancy, taking the lead in the inquiry with the air of one who was merely confirming a theory arrived at long ago. For his humor sometimes assumed

Continued on page 18

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NO OTHER WAY

a sardonic guise, and he loved to bewilder his colleagues.

"Oh, yes, I am sure of my facts. As it happens, I am an honors man in toxicology, and have made special researches into the nature and effect on the body of nicotine in its various forms. There are few poisons so little understood; or, rather, so widely misunderstood. The quantity of nicotine in tobacco is very small, seldom more than two per cent. in good cigars, while it oxidizes and volatilizes when exposed to the air; so it is nearly, if not quite, harmless in that form. But in crystals it is worse than arsenic."

"It can also be detected in tobacco smoke?" commented Clancy.

"Yes," and again the doctor wondered what manner of man this strangely wizened little fellow could be; for that was an addendum not likely to be made by anyone without close study of the subject under discussion. It was a pity Steingall was not present. He would have enjoyed the perplexity of the Atlantic City men.

"What dose would be fatal?" inquired the detective.

"A sixteenth of a grain induces active symptoms of poisoning. A grain will kill anybody. I have come to the conclusion that this unfortunate person, Kyrle, must have swallowed at least ten grains. But, of course, in a serious matter like this, you will need to have my opinion confirmed, and I have brought a portion of the viscera for submission to the State analyst," whereupon the doctor produced a gruesome-looking sealed bottle, and put it on the chief's desk.

BY this time the local official had smothered any feeling of resentment he might have felt against Clancy for what looked like a display of unnecessary reticence during their preliminary chat. Here was a criminal mystery of the first magnitude, and his professional soul gloated over the prospect.

"Great Scott!" he cried. "What a sensation this will cause tomorrow!"

"Well, not exactly tomorrow," put in Clancy pleasantly. "It would never do to blurt out all we know in that fashion. Dr. Gilman will simply stick to his original belief,—that the indications pointed to a fatal attack of heart disease,—and the inquest will be adjourned for a fortnight. We can take the Coroner fully into our confidence, and he will then close the inquiry at once. I need hardly insist that the less fuss we make about it now the more chance we have of laying hands on the criminals—supposing, that is, a crime has been committed."

On second thought, the chief agreed that Clancy was right. "All the same," he said sapiently, "we must not allow ourselves to be carried away from the main issue. Whatever the cause of death, the man was found in the boat, miles out at sea, and he was fond of sailing the cutter alone. In fact, he was a very unsociable personage, and had made no friends at Absecon; though he had lived in the Rosery during the last five years without a break. It strikes me at once as being a case of determined suicide, carried out in a rather melodramatic manner."

He thought he had summed up the affair rather neatly, and gazed complacently at the bottle on the table as though he half expected it to gurgle forth its approval. This,

however, the bottle did not do. A great blob of red sealing wax covered a capacious cork, and the green fluted glass revealed nothing of the noisome contents; while a red label, bearing the word "Poison" in big, black letters, stared back at him, but whether in agreement or reproach no man could say.

Clancy and the doctor exchanged glances. Each had the same thought,—that someone else might also be warned of the danger of being "carried away from the main issue." But Clancy changed the drift of the conversation. Generally he was tactful with the members of his own profession; unless, indeed, they were his actual colleagues of the bureau, whom he would rend and sear with sarcasm if they dared to differ with him when he was really in earnest.

IS anything known in Absecon of the widow, Mrs. Kyrle?" he asked.

"The two did not live together. I am told they have been more or less separated during some years; but I have ascertained by telephone from the police at Absecon that Mrs. Kyrle visited the deceased on Saturday week—came over from New York for the week end—and went off on Tuesday. It is not quite clear whether or not any strictly independent witness saw Kyrle alive subsequently; though two servants in the house are sure that their master was about the place for some hours after Mrs. Kyrle's departure. However, the widow is in Atlantic City now. She came here from Absecon today, and she has promised to attend the inquest tomorrow."

"They were not exactly at daggers drawn, then?" said Clancy.

"No. It doesn't strike one as being a complete severance between husband and wife. Oh, there is one odd thing which the man at Absecon told me. No one there, outside the household at the Rosery, knows Mrs. Kyrle by sight. She was seldom seen by daylight, although, when she turned up, she usually remained several days; but she always went about deeply veiled. Indeed, the women who saw her believed that she must be suffering from some disfigurement, and was unwilling to reveal it. Even I, after having met her today, could not describe her features; although she is a woman of very elegant appearance."

"You will see her face tomorrow, at any rate," said Clancy. "I suppose the Coroner will insist on her veil being raised?"

"Oh, no doubt. He is rather a stickler about photographs, though. I don't imagine he will give the snapshooters much liberty inside the court."

"I agree with him cordially," said Clancy. "In case nothing is said about photographers at the opening of the inquiry, will you kindly jog his memory?"

"Well, as you are interesting yourself in this business—"

"But I shall not be here."

"Not here! Why, I thought you were keen on it."

NOT at the present stage, and not officially at all. You see, tomorrow's proceedings will be quite formal,—identification, an order for burial, and an adjournment,—not another word, eh? Perhaps you can arrange to dispense altogether with Dr. Gilman's evidence; though it will do no harm if he just gives a colorless opinion founded exclusively on his earliest impression. Not a hint of foul play, on any account! By the way, Doctor, and Clancy swung round on the edge of his chair as if he were pulled by invisible wires, "what was your first impression? You saw the body in the boat, I take it?"

"Yes." Dr. Gilman hesitated a moment. "In a matter of this sort," he went on, "where a haphazard word might be mischievous, one ought to be careful in expressing oneself. But I think I can say that the naturalness of the position of the body was somewhat overdone. It had a sort of stage effect. A man of immense resolution might have kept himself unmoved on the little seat provided in the cockpit of the cutter, notwithstanding the frightful spasms induced by the preliminary effects of an irritant poison. But I should doubt it. In ordinary conditions, I would expect to find him doubled up with convulsions. Then, again, the scattered cigarettes had an air of deliberateness. To my mind, if Kyrle committed suicide he tried to convince those who found him that he had died instantly from heart disease: on the other hand, if he was murdered, and put in that boat by those who killed him, they aimed at achieving the same result."

"But a murderer does not try to advertise his work by placing the corpse of his victim

in a sailing boat, and then setting it adrift on the open sea," said the Atlantic City chief.

"It all depends what motive inspired the murder," said Clancy.

"In any case, it could hardly be the act of a wife who wanted to get rid of her husband, and I fancy it will be difficult to discover any other person in quiet little Absecon who would carry out a crime in such a sensational way." The speaker laughed at the notion. He knew these easygoing New Jersey folk, and Kyrle was just the kind of crank to kill himself ostentatiously.

Clancy nodded; but made no reply. Then he said, in his abrupt way, "Where are the cigarettes?"

"Here." The local police officer opened a drawer, and brought to light a number of cigarettes carefully wrapped in paper.

The detective counted them. There were eleven, all told, and they bore the name of a Fifth-ave. firm of importers.

"The newspaper spoke of a 'package of cigarettes,'" he said. "Was that a figure of speech, or was there actually a torn wrapper?"

"No wrapper was found. But our fishermen always buy cigarettes by the packet; so you would find them using the phrase naturally."

"Turkish too," said Clancy, with a dainty sniff. "High priced, I have no doubt; but poor in quality,—the sort of rubbish a woman smokes. I cannot conceive it possible for a woman to be a connoisseur of tobacco; can you, Dr. Gilman?"

"Not the cigarette-smoking lady of fashion."

"Any woman?"

"Yes. The old crone who smokes a pipe has an educated taste in the matter of thick twist, or ladies' roll, or nail-rod—just as her fancy lies. Tobaccoists tell me they have to be very particular about the quality of their cheap tobaccos."

Then Dr. Gilman hurried away; for he was in charge of a large practice, and his laboratory tests had demanded some hours of close attention.

SMART youngster, that," was Clancy's tribute when the door closed on the doctor. "Anything of interest found in the man's clothes?" he went on.

The chief gave him an inventory, and pulled open another drawer which contained a miscellaneous assortment of articles. A checkbook, mostly stubs, yielded little of interest, because nearly all the entries were to "Self," and the others obviously related to tradesmen's accounts. But among some letters was one that had been written by Mrs. Kyrle, and Clancy read it through as carefully as he had scrutinized that same handwriting at Providence the previous day. It ran:

DEAR HERBERT.—If convenient to you, I purpose running over from New York on Saturday. I shall leave again on Tuesday by the morning train; so I am sure you will not regard this brief visit as a very great affliction. Yours, JOSEPHINE.

He could not be certain; but he believed (a belief afterward verified) that the address given was one of those accommodation addresses which can be hired in New York and every other city. The date was that on which she had written to Waverton beseeching an interview. As for the handwriting, it was identical with that in the note signed "Feena."

"It confirms your information from Absecon," he said, "and is therefore valuable. Anything else in the correspondence?"

"The remaining letters are from gentlemen who seem to be members of some learned society. They are mostly in Greek, or about it."

"Greek!"

"Yes, giving different texts of Scripture, so far as I can make out."

It almost bewildered Clancy to picture Mrs. Delamar's husband as a man of a religious turn of mind; but a hasty survey of the letters themselves soon revealed the progress of a literary and scientific, if not an actively agnostic, inquiry into disputed verses of Holy Writ. One writer, a learned professor at Harvard, went so far as to charge Kyrle with deliberate suppression of contemporary history in his eagerness to prove a point in dispute.

"Would you like to see Kyrle's body? The mortuary is not more than five minutes' walk from here," suggested the chief of police.

Clancy declined the offer with thanks, and betook himself to the Pennsylvania station. He intended, he said, to pass the night in Philadelphia. When he was gone, the local official shook his head over the ways of New York. He was a man of wide experience; but he had never encountered a detective who resembled Clancy in any respect.

To be continued next Sunday

NO OTHER WAY

BY GORDON HOLMES

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS

CLAUDE G. WAVERTON, a rich young New Yorker, became so dissolute that his wife Doris was forced to get a divorce, which was just at the time he was seriously injured in an automobile accident at Palm Beach, Florida. He recovered at the Asphodel House, where he was attended by a woman of unsavory reputation, known as Mrs. Josephine Delamar. On his return to the North, Waverton's friends were astounded at the change in him: for he had dropped all his riotous habits and become a sober, respectable man. He saved his own child from drowning at Narragansett Pier; then spurned his wife's efforts to bring about a reconciliation and departed.

Herbert W. Kyrle of Absecon, New Jersey, Mrs. Delamar's husband, was found dead (supposedly from heart failure) in a cutter off Cape May. James Leander Steingall, inspector in charge of the New York Detective Bureau, and C. F. Clancy, his chief assistant, instantly took up the case. It was found that Kyrle had been poisoned.

communicating door, was a comfortable study, and, in the opposite corner of that side of the building, beyond a bathroom, was the bedroom in which Mrs. Kyrle had taken up her abode temporarily. The detective entered this room first.

Of course, as the woman was staying in Atlantic City at the moment, her dressing table was cleared of its knickknacks. A couple of heavy trunks, each bearing recent labels of Florida railways and hotels, stood at the foot of the bed. They were locked, and apparently full, and their presence perplexed Clancy for a moment. Then he laughed.

"It is peculiar," he half muttered, "how an empty house can get on one's nerves, and thus cloud one's brain. Of course, knowing that her husband was dead, she brought these trunks when she came here Monday, with the laudable intention of cramming them with articles she means to remove before the remaining contents of the house are sold, or the place is let furnished."

He next gave his attention to a writing table. Some clean blotting paper caught his eye, and he examined it. The uppermost sheet had been torn off, and he had already noted a quantity of burnt paper in the grate.

He grinned, with the appreciation of an expert. A first-rate adventuress of the Mrs. Delamar type knew better than to leave the impressions of addressed envelopes and scraps of her correspondence to be read in a mirror by any inquisitive servant—not to mention a detective!

Nevertheless, he picked out of the grate two among a great many stumps of cigarettes. They were all of the same brand as those found in the cutter.

He opened wardrobes and drawers; but they contained only a litter of discarded garments, dresses of bygone fashion, old hats, faded ribbons and the like. At any rate, it was evident that this particular room had always been regarded as Mrs. Kyrle's private apartment, and, in view of the strained relations between her husband and herself, the fact was somewhat peculiar.

Passing into the dead man's study he found evidence in plenty of scholarly tastes and habits. A Greek lexicon lay open on the table, a number of commentaries on the Gospels were piled on table and floor, and a well filled piperack explained the lingering and pungent smell of tobacco. Oddly enough, there was no sign of a cigarette, whereas a tobacco jar on the mantelpiece contained a quantity of rather fragrant mixture. Clancy promptly appropriated some part of the jar's contents. The brand, at least, could be identified, and that might lead to discovery of the store that supplied it. Indeed, before night came, the detective had learned that Kyrle bought his weed locally, and never smoked cigarettes.

He picked up a waste-paper basket, cleared a space on the table, and began a detailed scrutiny of the scraps of paper that nearly filled it. There were circulars, torn letters, bills, roughly jotted memoranda as to the meanings of certain Greek and Hebrew words (a few of these Clancy retained, as he believed they were in the dead man's handwriting), and other odds and ends; but nothing of any real significance.

In the neighboring bedroom the detective's close search was equally fruitless. Beyond the small matter of the cigarettes, he had to confess that he had advanced not an inch in his investigation. He was standing in the gallery that ran round the hall when a queer noise of scraping and rattling sounded among the boards at his feet, and instantly the dead echoes of the house awoke to the loud peal of a bell.

CLANCY was startled. He would be the last to deny it. For an instant his heart stood still, and his wrinkled face assumed an ivory tint. He was never ashamed of betraying fear or emotion or any kind, because he held that the man who said he did not know the meaning of fear must be either an exceptional person or a fool. Moreover, he was proud of his imaginative faculties; for, without them, he could never have attained his remarkable celebrity in his profession.

So he shook now visibly for a second or two, and was still pale when he began to chuckle at the trick his excitable nerves had played him.

"It was that confounded wire moving along the walls and passage that upset me," he growled. "The clang of a bell is not mysterious in itself, because someone has pulled it, just as I did; but I was not ready for the wire."



"Why Has He Come Bothering Here?" Growled Clancy.

CHAPTER IV. (Continued)

Suicide—or Murder?

BUT the diminutive sleuth knew what he was about. He meant to obtain a warrant to enable him to enter the Rosery, if such a drastic step were demanded; but he ascertained next day that the house was deserted, because Mrs. Kyrle, Mary Mallow (cook-housekeeper), and a man named Hopkins (gardener and general factotum) were all at Atlantic City, summoned thither for the inquest.

The house was admirably situated for the residence of a recluse. It lay in a delightful country lane running parallel with the shore of the shallow channel that cuts off the sandspit of Atlantic City from the mainland. A hedge—or rather a long, high, dense clump of rhododendrons and other evergreens—absolutely shut off the building from view, and even the carriageway leading to the front door wound between thick screens of shrubbery. All around the outer borders of nearly two acres of ground were tall trees and thorn hedges which had been allowed to run wild. Indeed, it was evident that the estate had been laid out by some wealthy amateur gardener who had employed half a dozen men; but now only a small section near the house was kept in order. The rest was an overgrown wilderness; even the wealth of American Beauty roses that gave the place its name had not been allowed to riot for years unpruned and untrained.

At one time a lawn had extended from the drawing room windows to high-water mark; but the open view of the sea thus afforded had been deliberately blocked by an ugly boathouse, while some three or four rows of semitropical shrubs had been planted on the fine turf, apparently with the sole object of shutting out the prying eyes of boating parties.

But Clancy gave only slight heed to these eccentricities of taste. He walked rapidly round the exterior of the house, and then, to make sure it was unoccupied for the hour, rang the front doorbell.

HE heard a loud jangle in some remote apartment; but there was no answer. Then he peered through the windows, and found himself looking into two well furnished rooms that bore no signs of being used. One was apparently a morning room, and the other a library; but they were dust-sheeted and desolate.

Passing to the left, and then to the right, through another of the leafy alleys with which the strange property abounded, he reached the kitchen quarters. Here were tokens of life, and a half-open scullery window looked inviting; for there is little dread of thieves in these remote corners of New Jersey. He raised the lower sash, climbed in, replaced the window in its original position, and began a tour of the interior.

The dining room and drawing room faced the channel, or, to be exact, looked out on a row of shrubs and trees backed by the corrugated iron roof of the boathouse. These were evidently in everyday occupancy; but they did not invite close inquiry. A staircase climbed two sides of a spacious central hall, and up this Clancy skipped nimbly. Furnished but disused bedrooms filled the front upper floor; but three rooms on the back promised developments. One was evidently the dead man's sleeping apartment. Next to it, with a



Then, stealing on noiseless feet to a window of one of the front rooms, he peeped out. A policeman in uniform was standing on the stretch of gravel in front of the door. He had taken off his helmet, because the weather was warm and he had evidently been walking fast. His forehead was bald and domelike, and glistened with perspiration, and he was trying to fan himself with the helmet.

"Why doesn't the idiot use a handkerchief?" growled Clancy. "Surely he has one—a red one, for choice. But why has he come bothering here? Someone has sent him. Who? If I cannot answer that question before I come on him unaware from behind that hedge, I shall feel that I am losing my grip."

CHAPTER V.

Showing How Mrs. Delamar Received a Shock

HE sped swiftly and quietly down the steps, across the hall, along a passage, and through the kitchen and scullery. With the deftness of a professional burglar, he let himself out through the window without making any sound that could possibly reach the front of the house. Running stealthily on tiptoe until he was about to emerge from the hedge-lined path, he suddenly changed his pace to a leisurely stroll. Thus, when the policeman first heard and saw him, he appeared to have sauntered casually out from of that part of the garden.

Then he smiled. The man was mopping his head with a large and vividly scarlet handkerchief.

"Hello!" said Clancy genially.

"Would ye moind tellin' me yer name, Sorr?" said the policeman.

"Clancy. Have you brought a message from Mr. Steingall?"

"Well, if that don't bate the band!" gasped the other. "I'm a daisy at guessing," cackled the detective.

"But, Sorr, you would hardly believe what a bother it has been to find you. Ye were 'phoned for at Atlantic City an' Philadelphia from New York, and then we were rung up; but the devil a one had seen you in Absecon. Only the gentleman in New York insisted that you

must be here. So here I am. Still, it's square you should know it at wanst."

"Well, and what does the gentleman in New York want?"

"He wants to have a talk with you, Sorr. Will you plaze come wid me an' give him a call?"

"Certainly. He told you my name, of course?"

"Yiss, Sorr."

"And did he describe me?"

The policeman looked into his helmet as though he half expected to discover some cabalistic symbol in its lining that had not been there previously. Then he put it on. "The gentleman axed me to hurry, Sorr. May I ax if he was the chief of the bureau?"

"Come, now, how did he describe me? Did he say I was a little bit of a chap?"

"His exact wurrds, Sorr."

"With a funny face and big ears?"

The policeman coughed discreetly.

"Of course he could hardly fail to mention my principal attractions," went on Clancy dryly. "Well, it would be a pity if you did not carry away a mental picture of the renowned sleuth at the other end of the wire. He looks like a pugilistic barkeep; he walks like an elephant; he always has a cigar tucked in a corner of his mouth; and he thinks he can grow sweet peas in a Brooklyn back yard."

Then Clancy condescended to give his attention to business, and during the walk into Absecon extracted some scraps of information as to the habits of the late Mr. Kyrle, in so far as the policeman was acquainted with them.

THE man, it seemed, had been a complete recluse for five years. His only form of amusement and exercise was sailing the cutter, in which he was quite proficient, though he nearly always chose a night tide for his cruises. Mrs. Kyrle was a rare visitor: she had come to Absecon perhaps four times; in all. Neither of the servants at the Rosery would discuss master or mistress with other people. Mary Mallow was a stranger in the district, and Hopkins had evidently been given to understand that the first hint of gossip that reached his employer's ears would cost him his situation. He was utilized for running errands and doing chores rather than gardening. No tradesman was allowed to come near the house. Even the postman was invariably met by Hopkins at the gate, and would there hand over letters and parcels, if any.

"Never any visitors, I suppose?" said Clancy, when his companion had no more to say of Kyrle.

"None that I know of, Sorr."

"Is the house rented, or leased, or do they own it?"

"I've been told that Mr. Kyrle bought it from the gentleman who laid out the garden. I'm a bit of a gardener meself, and it's a sin and a shame to see the way that place has been spoiled. Did you say, Sorr, that Mr. Steingall was keen on sweet peas?"

"Yes."

"And why can't he grow 'em?"

"Because they don't thrive on the carbondioxid they get in a town."

"Then why give it to 'em, Sorr? Belave me, it's as aisy—" and the policeman launched into an eloquent description of the right way in which to cultivate *Lathyrus odoratus*; though he did not so miscall a pretty flower, any more than he recognized carbondioxid as a constituent of city air.

IF Clancy had received a shock when the bell jarred the silence of the deserted house, he experienced a worse one at the telephone. He knew instantly by the seriousness in Steingall's voice that something quite out of the common had happened.

"This business had taken a nasty turn," said the chief. "I cannot say much over the wire, for obvious reasons; but a diary has come to hand, and you ought to see it at once. Where shall I send it, so as to reach you tomorrow morning?"

"Care of police station house, Absecon," said Clancy.

"Oh, you mean to remain there? I fancy you are right. You will understand better when you have read certain passages. By the way, I've had a nice old hunt after you. I don't think there is another man in the bureau who would have been so positive as to your whereabouts."

"The local cop had no difficulty in identifying me. Your description was lucid to a degree."

"You don't mean to say—"

"Oh, yes. I wormed it out of him. Big ears, have I?"

"Well, accuracy is often painful. Perhaps he recognized you by your Irish name. His accent is the sure thing. When did he land?"

"Ah, if only you knew his opinion of you as a grower of sweet peas! But listen a moment. It has been established that the real agent was nicotine crystals. Of course, I promptly shut down all public reference till later."

He heard Steingall's whistle of comprehension. A moment later came the guarded words:

"Evidently you must stop where you are. As usual, you have hit on the right place. You will understand fully in the morning. Meanwhile, send me a line. Let me hear if you want help. Goodby."

IN a small community, like that at Absecon, it was impossible for a hue and cry to be raised about Clancy by telephone without more persons than the police being able to form a shrewd estimate as to his profession, and it was no part of the scheme slowly taking shape in his brain that his presence in the neighborhood should be an open secret.

His natural ally, the policeman, explained the ins and outs of the local train service, complicated, as it is, by a ferry, and promised to carry out certain instructions

later in the evening; so Clancy went to the ferry, and, after making the acquaintance of a ticket examiner, lounged about the waterfront until the arrival of a boat from Atlantic City in which, if he had calculated aright, Mrs. Delamar (to use the name by which she was generally known) would travel to Absecon. He believed that when the inquest was adjourned she would arrange for the burial of her husband's body on Friday, and, true to her pose as a grief-stricken wife, would attend it. But she would feel safer from prying eyes at the Rosery than in Atlantic City, and would probably return to the latter place early on the day of the funeral. Then, if affairs at Absecon were closed satisfactorily, she would go straight to New York by the night express.

Whether or not Mrs. Delamar was responsible for the death of the unhappy man whose name she refused to bear, the detective could not form a clear opinion. But, in many aspects, she was of the criminal class, and Clancy had an extraordinary genius for projecting himself into the mind of such a woman, and thus forecasting her actions under certain given conditions.

"There," he said to the ticket examiner, when Mrs. Delamar stepped ashore on a dimly lighted landing stage, "is that the lady to whom you spoke last Tuesday week?"

"That's her," said the man. "I could swear to her among a thousand—by her walk and general get-up, I mean, because I couldn't see her face."

"And you are quite sure she did not go to New York that evening?"

"Why, Sir, how could she, when she went back to Atlantic City, and passed through here again this day week?"

"You are positive about the dates?"

"I can't help being positive, Sir. By mistake, she gave up an out-of-date round trip ticket, and paid the fare for a single journey."

"There may be nothing in the matter, or it may be very important. At any rate, I shall see that an official letter is sent from the bureau to your boss complimenting you on your attention to detail."

"It's very good of you, Sir," said the gratified ticket man. "May I ask who the lady is, and why you are interested in her movements?"

"I shall tell you that subsequently. But say no word of my inquiry to anyone. She went into the town, and remained there a couple of hours—is that correct?"

"To a minute. There are just two hours and ten minutes between the boats, and, if you allow five minutes for the stroll into the town—why, there you have it."

To those unacquainted with the geography of that part of New Jersey it should be explained that Absecon may be approached from Atlantic City either by rail or by a ferry across the channel that shuts off the larger town from the mainland, and the two places are some five miles apart.

Clancy, who had already unearthed the sinister fact that Mrs. Delamar, instead of traveling to New York before her husband's disappearance, had actually gone there after it, meant to follow up the trail at Atlantic City next day. He took no great credit to himself for the discovery. He was in Absecon for the purpose of shadowing Mrs. Delamar if she returned to the Rosery, and his chat with the ticket agent was a matter of pure chance.

But, in laying bare a mystery, chance sometimes helps a detective, and sometimes balks him. This was an occasion when it had carried the inquiry a league in a single stride. "Chance," it has been well said, "assists him who is prepared for it."

Still, Clancy did not jump at conclusions. Mrs. Delamar was a clever woman, and if she was engaged in a plot against her husband's life it was almost ridiculous to suppose that she would go out of her way to manufacture evidence against herself in the matter of the ticket and the unusual double journey.

When waiting at the ferry he had written to Steingall:

Of course I await the diary (Kyrle's, I suppose) with bated breath. But the man was a crank, and, whether alive or dead, cranks are apt to be unusual. Thus far, the only link connecting the woman with the man's death is the presence in the boat of cigarettes that, presumably, she alone smokes. Just now they impress me as being a trifle too obvious.

After watching the arrival of Mrs. Delamar and her servants, he scribbled a note, detailing his later investigations; but he added no comment. This was an odd circumstance in itself, because Clancy loved

to theorize when he had such a safe ear as Steingall's.

Avoiding the ferry road, by which the passengers were making for the town, Clancy attended a rendezvous higher up the channel, where the policeman, now in mufti, awaited him with a boat.

IT was a perfect night of early summer; silence and its twin sister, peace, brooded over the waters. A few stars were blinking in a violet sky, and a slight haze rising from the smooth sea tinted the low sandhills with a deep maroon, through which the lighted windows of dwellings shone dimly. Suddenly, as it were, the impressionable Gallic Celt found himself in sympathy with the unhappy recluse who had sought forgetfulness in sailing by night on this secluded back-water.

But the mood passed as the boat neared the Rosery. His mind was busy with the why and wherefore of a quest that must either justify itself within a few hours or be abandoned as a useless waste of energy on the part of the Detective Bureau.

In the shadow of the gaunt boatshed and its guardian trees the darkness was intense; but the prosaic policeman backed the skiff into what seemed to be a black and impenetrable wall, for the tide was at the top of the flood, and the boatshed had become a floating wharf.

"If ye put yer hand out now, Sorr," he whispered, "ye will find a sort of landing place, with a mooring ring about a foot or so from the edge. It will scare the birrds if we light a match; though that wouldn't matter a dale, because none of the people can have reached the house yet."

Clancy, however, preferred to grope about until he had found the ring. He climbed out, sought his companion's hand, and took a small rope with which he made the boat fast. Then the other joined him, and they crept along a path until they stood among the dense undergrowth within a few feet of the seaward front of the house, and separated from it by a narrow strip of lawn. There was some rustling in the trees overhead; but the two men moved so quietly that never a roosting bird was disturbed.

The detective's object in watching the exterior of the dwelling was simple enough. This was the inhabited side, and he wished to learn, if only by inference, whether or not Mrs. Delamar would conduct herself in a normal manner. She must be weary after the strain of a long day. Would she retire to her room as quickly as possible, or would she keep an uneasy vigil till dawn? If the latter, what form would her restlessness take? A good deal depended on this small issue. If Mrs. Delamar went to bed and composed herself to sleep within the next half-hour, Clancy would have added difficulty in believing that she was tortured by the memory of a crime. He laid stress on such trivialities as these. He would say to Steingall in an expansive moment:

"Let me watch any suspected man or woman for an hour while they believe themselves alone and unseen, and I will tell you positively whether they are

With Rare Courage
She Rushed to
the Window.



HOWARD
GILES, 1912

guilty or innocent. Of course, they must not know they are suspected, because suspicion may torture the innocent far more than the guilty. It is the workings of conscience I want to see, not the anguish of innocence unjustly accused."

Yet not all his wide experience prepared him for the incidents he was destined to witness that night. If not unique,—because stranger things have happened,—they were new to Clancy, and he would scarce have credited the story if it came to him only by hearsay.

THE watchers had not long to wait. Though the boat had gone straight to the Rosery, the cab that brought Mrs. Delamar and the servants from the ferry had soon covered the tortuous road that skirted the scattered buildings of Absecon, and then descended again to the water's edge.

The vehicle stopped at the gate. They heard it drive off, steps sounded on the carriage-way, a key rattled, and soon a lamp was lighted in the dining room.

An angular, hard-featured woman drew the blinds.

"That's Mary Mallow, the housekeeper," whispered the policeman.

"A dark night suits her style of beauty," said Clancy, and the other man chuckled; for this bit of sarcasm was intended to come within his comprehension.

Soon a light glimmered in the larder, and it was reasonable to suppose that a meal was being improvised. Mrs. Delamar had evidently gone straight to her bedroom; for a candle threw a mild beam through its windows into the darkness. The watchers could see her head and shoulders as she passed to and fro while removing her hat and wraps. Then she went down stairs again, undoubtedly to the dining room; but, to make sure, Clancy stole across the lawn, and screwed an eye through a chink in the blind.

Fortunately, Mrs. Delamar had seated herself in front of the best available opening. She was in profile; but her face was lighted by the lamp, and it was easy to see that Black Care was her vis-à-vis in a perfunctory feast. She tried to eat a breast of chicken and some dainty slices of ham. The fare looked appetizing enough; but soon she pushed away the plate, and nibbled a crust of bread while sipping some claret.

Taking a letter from her pocket, she read it, evidently not for the first time, and she was thinking so deeply that some of her really remarkable beauty fled, and left her cold, calculating, almost repellent.

At last, abandoning the pretense of eating, she rose, crumpled up the letter in one hand, and carried the lamp in the other into the drawing room. She went to a writing table, and was seemingly far too intent on her present purpose to bother about the blinds, so that a small area of the lawn was faintly illuminated through three French windows that opened on a veranda. Clancy thought it advisable to rejoin his companion, which he succeeded in doing by making a detour. Again there were some nervous rustlings and flutterings high up in the trees. The birds perched there probably saw him, and they surely heard him.

Mrs. Delamar wrote, and wrote. She covered page after page of note paper, often consulting the letter produced in the dining room, and beginning again after pondering some new passage. Mary Mallow came in; but was promptly sent off. At last, after writing for nearly an hour, Mrs. Delamar addressed an envelop, and, picking up the eight or nine sheets of the letter, began to read what she had written, thereby proving herself a more careful correspondent than the majority of her sex.

At that moment a tug snorted its way down the channel, and the policeman, who wondered what motive could inspire this queer little New York detective to watch a woman writing a letter, joggled Clancy's arm.

"Tis shallow wather hereabouts, an' the tide will be fallin' a bit, Sorr," he muttered. "I had better go and pay out the painter, or our boat'll be left high and drry, and it'll be a job gettin' her off."

"I am sorry to keep you waiting," said Clancy; "but I must remain here until the lady retires. I cannot explain things to you now; but all this helps. I do not think we shall be here much longer. Anyhow, see to your boat."

THE policeman moved away. It was possible that he was somewhat tired, and that his limbs had stiffened. Be that as it may, he stumbled over a tree root, and a dry branch cracked under his feet. Instantly an ear-splitting screech came from some point in the dark pall above their heads, a cry so hideously unexpected and appallingly near that the blood seemed to freeze in Clancy's veins.

It reached Mrs. Delamar's ears too; in-

deed, it could hardly fail to do that, since it must have been audible far out on the surface of the sea channel. She sprang to her feet, her face twisted with horror and uncertainty; but, with rare courage, rushed to a window, threw it open, and peered out.

"Who is there?" she said, and Clancy, despite his own sweat of fear and total lack of recognition of the source of that unnerving din, felt a subconscious admiration for the dauntless spirit of a woman who dared even inquire into its cause.

The policeman, who had not gone a yard, remained stock still, and so did Clancy. The silence was profound, the only sounds being the diminished snorts of the tug's exhaust, and these served rather to enhance the absolute stillness that reigned in the grounds of the Rosery. Then there was the click of a latch, and Mary Mallow and the gardener came out at the side of the house; though shut off from sight of the lawn by one of the many tall hedges that converted the place into a leafy maze.

Gaining confidence from the nearness of the servants, Mrs. Delamar advanced a few paces into the open.

"Hopkins," she began, "did you hear—"

Then something swooped at her out of the void, and she was attacked so fiercely from the air that she screamed in quick terror and cowered to the earth.

"Oh, Heaven have mercy!" she sobbed. "Help! Help! Ah, have pity! I am not fit to die!"

Someone crashed through the laurels, and a man's form appeared. He carried a heavy stick, and smote fiercely at an object that whirled and fluttered above the woman's head. With one blow, which got home, the assailant was vanquished.

"Don't you be scared, Ma'am," he cried. "It's an owl, that's what it is. I hope it hasn't hurt you."

There was no answer: Mrs. Delamar had fainted.

The gardener called to the frightened housekeeper, "Come here, Mary. Here's Madam in a faint. She was battered by an owl; but it'll not trouble you. I've laid it out, the varmint!"

Between them they carried Mrs. Delamar into the house, and Clancy, as in a dream, heard them deciding to take her to the bedroom, where Mary Mallow could more easily apply the simple restoratives known to every woman in an emergency of this nature.

He was roused, and considerably startled, by a hand being laid on his shoulder.

"Now, who'd ha thought an owl would kick up a divvil of a row loike that?" said the policeman, to whom the hoot of night's woodland beldame was no new thing; though he had never before known the bird to attack a human being.

"It must ha bin worried by us dodgin' in and out among the threes," he went on, happily oblivious of the fact that Clancy was nearly as shaken as the woman who had just been beaten by the creature's wings and probably scratched by its claws. "It made me jump when it let out that yell; though I knew in a flash what it was. Av coorse, it was dazed by the light, an' hardly knew what it was doin' when it set about her. Holy war! she must ha fancied that Ould Nick hisself, wid hoofs an' horns, had flown at her."

The man's homely accents supplied the best of all tonics. With each passing second Clancy regained better control of his scattered wits, and now he saw that once more chance had befriended him.

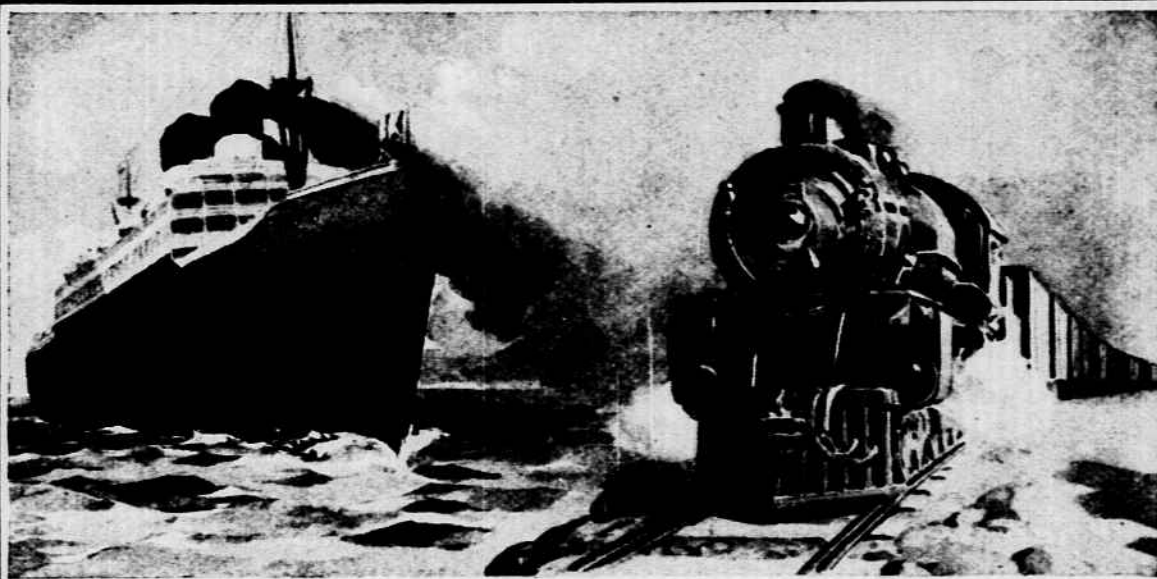
"Don't go!" he hissed. "Wait here till I return."

HE ran straight to the open window, and heard Hopkins and the housekeeper straining up the stairs with their inanimate burden. With silent haste he crossed the room to the writing table. The letter that Mrs. Delamar had consulted so earnestly lay there. He snatched it up, and read the address,—the hotel at Narragansett Pier at which Claude Waverton had stayed! It was signed with a hieroglyph of initials; but a glance at the envelop addressed for reply showed that the writer could have been none other than John Stratton Tearle.

With devouring eyes he extracted some sense of its purport. It described the rescue of the child, and one sentence bit into Clancy's brain. "You may be quite certain that if this extraordinary accident had brought them together again, it would have spoiled everything."

Many times did the writer harp on "the narrow escape," "the luck" of Waverton's early adventure, and "the singular change in the man—he seemed to be quite a reformed character."

Before the letter closed it was evident that Tearle had read of Kyrle's death; but on this topic he was not so outspoken. "I have just seen a report in the paper," he wrote. "Of course things are going well for us; but



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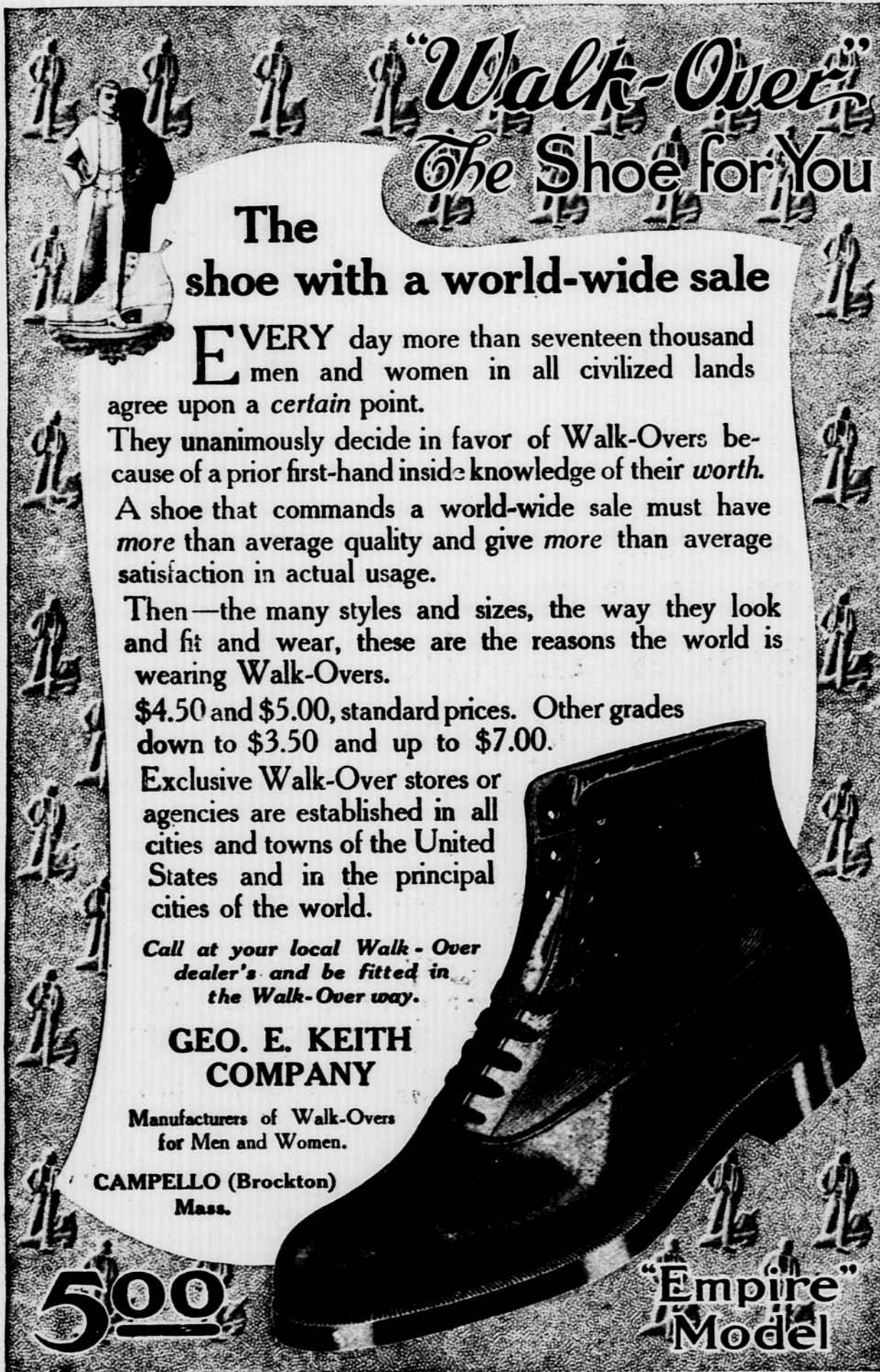
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WE PAY FREIGHT

leave congratulations and inquiries till we meet."

A door was thrown open above, and Clancy realized that he must hurry. He was greatly tempted to stuff Mrs. Delamar's voluminous missive into his pocket; but forbore. Such a proceeding would not only be wholly unwarrantable, a drawback that would not have weighed with him for an instant, but it might also prove a real blunder, because Mrs. Delamar's first sentiment thought must travel to her precious correspondence. If the letter was missing, it would need more than a bewildered owl to account for its disappearance.

So he skimmed a few pages with lightning speed. They told of the inquest, of her journeys, of the anxiety with which she was consumed. "Fortunately," ran one phrase, "I had left Absecon for New York before my husband went away in the cutter for the last time." Another, "We had a wretched scene on the Monday." A third, "For once I was really afraid; but I stuck to my guns." And the last, for the stairs were creaking under a heavy descending step, "Oh, what a relief it is to wake and know that I am free! Now I can act openly. Before, there was always the dread of discovery and the impossibility of taking a decisive plunge."

Clancy flitted out like a ghost, just as Hopkins reached the hall. In fact, he was not sure the man had not seen him, until the absence of any outcry showed that pursuit was not to be feared in that quarter.

In the center of the lawn his foot touched the dead body of the owl. He would have liked to carry it away as a trophy, just to convince Steingall; but again resisted his first impulse, because its discovery next morning would allay any suspicion of the presence of other intruders.

"Where are you?" he whispered, halting in front of the black wall of foliage, and a hand was stretched forth to guide him.

They managed to reach the boatshed without arousing any other inhabitants of the trees, and the policeman, who was skilled in the management of a boat, used the leverage of an oar to push off into deep water; for the craft was not quite afloat, owing to the fall of the tide.

"Well," said the man, when they had dropped a good way down channel, "that was a quare go, Mr. Clancy, wasn't it?"

"I have seldom known a quarer," agreed Clancy.

"An' just because that blessed owl flew at her, she said she wasn't fit to die," went on the other in awed tones.

"People often say that when they really mean that they are not fit to live," said Clancy, and the policeman, glancing over his shoulder to ascertain his direction, remarked that some folk were quare, they were.

CLANCY'S first care on reaching the policeman's home was to copy into his notebook every syllable he could remember of the contents of the two letters scanned under such singular conditions. Then he went to the comfortable bedroom kindly placed at his disposal, and was sound asleep in five minutes.

Next morning came a registered package addressed in Steingall's handwriting. Within was a book, bound in vellum, and fitted with a lock and key; a note from the chief accompanied it. This ran:

MY DEAR CLANCY.—Inside the cover of the inclosed diary you will find two letters,—one dated the first inst., from Kyrle to his friend Leon Anthony, M. A., professor of Hebrew at Harvard University; the other, of yesterday's date, from Professor Anthony to the Commissioner of Police, New York. I have skimmed through the diary, and have jotted down on a separate slip some of the pages in which occur passages bearing on your present inquiry. If, after weighing the facts carefully, you think fit to turn over the whole affair to the New Jersey authorities (who will, of course, arrest "Mrs. Delamar" forthwith on the capital charge), you have my sanction for adopting this course. You may, however, have some reason for holding your hand at the moment; so I leave you full liberty of action. Naturally, the statements in the diary are not evidence, save in regard to proof of motive, and perhaps of intent. Other items, of which I am ignorant, may have come to light locally, and it may be necessary to effect an arrest at once. But the actual decision I leave to you. Ring me up later in the day. I am interested in this case. It has features out of the common.

Yours, J. L. S.

"Name of a good little gray man!" murmured Clancy, who swore in French, if at all, "I may still be able to secure that owl and have it stuffed. If it figures as a witness, it ought to provide the lawyers with a series of sparkling jokes."

He was reading the letter in his bedroom, and had just settled down in a comfortable armchair, with his back to the light, when a knock at the door heralded the appearance of his ally of the previous night. The man was carrying a dead screech owl, a magnifi-

cent specimen, unusually large, and with "spectacles" remarkably well indicated.

"I thought you'd loike to have this, Sorr," came the grinning explanation.

Somehow, the detective credited his friend with a large amount of commonsense; so he repressed the first angry question that rose to his lips.

"How did you get hold of it?" he asked.

"Simplest thing in the wurld, Sorr. Sthrollin' along the lane opposite the Rosery, I meets Hopkins, an' he ups an' tells me all about last night's affair, or all that he knew, at any rate. I said, 'Well, that's quare. What have you done wid the bird?'—'Mrs. Kyrle ordered me to throw it away. She hated the sight of it,' says he. 'Give it to me,' says I. 'I'd loike to show it to my kiddies.' So here it is."

"I am very much obliged to you. Is the lady any the worse for her fright?"

"Not a bit, Hopkins says. She kep' the claws off her face; but her arms were scratched, an' her dress was torn. She soon recovered, though, an' made so little of the faintin' fit that she went downstairs again."

"I thought she would," said Clancy dryly. Then, with the hapless owl lying on a table before his eyes, he unlocked the diary.

THE first letter, that from Kyrle to the Harvard professor, struck a tragic note at the outset:

MY DEAR ANTHONY.—I am sending you a diary which I have kept intermittently during some years,—nearly six, to be exact, seeing that it was begun a year after my marriage to Josephine Delamar, daughter of the late Guilmo Delamar, cotton merchant, of New Orleans. I met her in Paris, and was fool enough to be fascinated by her beauty and charm of manner; though all my knowledge of life should have warned me against marrying a woman—or a girl, as she was then—whose exotic nature could not fail to rebel against the conventions and seeming narrowness of an American middle-class home. Some of my subsequent sufferings are depicted in the diary; so I shall not enlarge on them now.

My present object in making you the book's custodian is this: I think I am near death. I am not ill, nor suffering from any organic disease which may suddenly become active. No, if I believed in second sight, or other such owlish forebodings, I should fancy I had been given a warning. It is a hard thing to say; but I know that my wife desires my death, because I have steadily refused to divorce her. I may be wrong, horribly mistaken, as a misanthrope (which I have become) is apt to be. If I am in error, I have atoned for my blunder by making a will that leaves her in full possession of all my property.

But—and now I reach the object I have at heart—should you hear of my death in suspicious circumstances, or in circumstances which, though not suspicious, point to accident or extraordinary suddenness, I want you to send this letter and the diary to the authorities. That is all. An official investigation of the nature and cause of my demise will follow in due course, and my wife may be fully exonerated, which is my sincere wish.

I am sure I can depend on you in this. Provided I am the mere victim of a hallucination, I shall write on other matters as usual.

Believe me,

Sincerely,

HERBERT W. KYRLE.

Clancy, an impressionist if ever there was one, had glanced once at the dead bird when he read. When he had made an end, he gazed at the heap of rumpled feathers for some seconds.

The second letter was the outcome of the worthy professor's grief and astonishment at hearing of his friend's death. He explained that he did not read the newspapers regularly, and had been inclined to look on the depositing of the diary as a freak on the part of his old crony and correspondent, Herbert Widlake Kyrle, until the news of the discovery of Kyrle's body in an open boat on the high seas reached him in conversation at a luncheon party. He thought it his duty then to fulfil instantly the sad task imposed on him; though he hoped and believed that Kyrle's peculiar state of mind alone had led to this curious bequest. The man had always been slightly eccentric, and there were not lacking signs, during later years, of a morbidness of thought rendered pungent, though hardly lightened, by a sardonic humor.

"Very well put, my excellent professor," commented Clancy. "I don't know anything about Hebrew; but if you explain its difficulties as clearly as you have summed up Kyrle, I am willing to take your say-so on the Moabite Stone."

Then he plunged into the diary. As a record of a scholar's broken life it was of supreme interest; but its discursive comments on events, though of some literary value, would be out of place in a narrative dealing with the careers of several people who had never so much as heard the writer's name.

Clancy's summary of its contents are more to the point. Since he took pains to state his exact views thereon in a letter to Steingall,

the passage in question may be extracted: Kyrle appears to have been a wealthy man, with leanings toward classical research, both in the way of clearing up rival texts of ancient documents and, when young, in the exploration of Egyptian and Jewish monuments. He was returning to the States after a long spell of work in Palestine, when he met Josephine Delamar, and, as he himself puts it, the atmosphere of Paris intoxicated him. Possibly its wine helped; for I find many later references to various vintages as being "helpful in banishing that black dog, Care." At any rate, he married Josephine because she was "beautiful and vivacious," as good reasons as any for the folly of matrimony, and of course she resented the idea of burying her charms among frayed manuscripts and weatherworn stones.

Within a year she had demanded liberty and an allowance. Singularly enough, Kyrle seems to have granted both with some alacrity. He fancied he could go back to his interrupted studies with renewed zest; but was only partly successful. Every now and then he missed the presence of his wife, and these fits of depression of which he makes frequent complaint were invariably induced by some paragraph in the newspapers alluding to her.

At last, when "Mrs. Delamar" was anxious to establish herself in a different set, I suppose, she began to press for a complete divorce—on terms, for she needed money. From covert hints she passed to open disclosures, but always verbally, during her rare visits to the Rosery. In this matter, however, his refusal to fall in with her wishes was consistent. In his diary he says, over and over again, "I have yoked myself to a Jezebel, a brazen woman, an adventuress of the worst type, and I shall pay the penalty of my crass stupidity by declining to set her free with plenty of means to play her dangerous arts on some other ninny. . . . She may entrap a fool; but she cannot enslave him for life while she remains my legal spouse. . . . I have tied a millstone round my neck. Very well, let it strangle me: I shall not undo the knot."

At last the lady's pleading turned to threats, according to Kyrle's version, and these assumed an alarming aspect during the visit that ended

in his death. She stated, in so many words, that she could now compel Claude Waverton to marry her; that her life had been "wasted" by Kyrle; that she was resolved to end the bondage; and that she might in her frenzy resort to desperate measures. He says he was afraid of her. Somehow, I don't quite credit it.

All this, of course, you have read. I am just tabulating my own expressions here, and it will be valuable to learn how far they agree with or differ from yours. I must add instantly that Mrs. Delamar's account of the final argument (as shown by the scraps of her letter to Tearle) carries the story a little farther. She seems to have won her point as to the divorce; but the threats appear to have been not entirely one-sided. However, she did not scruple to lie to her confederate at Narragansett Pier, because she traveled to New York on Wednesday, and not, as she tells him, on Tuesday; and, whosoever may have been "threatened," it was Kyrle who died.

At present I shall not disclose a word of the information I have gathered. I do not purpose seeing Mrs. Delamar or the servants at the Rosery. In fact, after I have made certain inquiries here, I shall return to New York. I absolutely agree with you as to this case having "features." I am beginning to think that we are on the track of a real big thing. If Mrs. Delamar wanted to marry Waverton, and Tearle was anxious to marry Mrs. Waverton, not only was Kyrle's death necessary, but the foundations of the plot were laid months ago, and a long way from Absecon.

I am sending the owl to the taxidermist's place on Broadway. Will you kindly call there, and explain that I want it mounted with wings outstretched and claws extended for attack? Do you recall the singular use of the word "owl" in Kyrle's letter? Some Frenchman has a theory about human souls passing into the bodies of lower animals, and I fancy he would claim boldly that Kyrle's spirit inhabited the owl. "It's queer, that it is," as my local guide, philosopher, and friend says. I shall tell you more about him. He is only a country policeman; but in his way he is quite a "char-ac-ter," to use his own phrase.

To be continued next Sunday

SAVING THE PLATINUM

By F. IRVING ANDERSON

EVEN the United States Government has become possessed of the present-day fever to eliminate any waste and stop leaks in the methods of doing things. The results, particularly in the mints and assay offices, have been remarkable.

For instance, the old method of extracting gold from baser metals when it came from the mint consisted merely of treating the smelter bars of gold with nitric acid, which dissolved out the baser metals, leaving the gold, with a small percentage of impurities that could be removed by fusing with niter.

Germany went the United States one better in this. The professors over there, men whose genius for scientific detail is unsurpassed by those of any other nation, perfected a process for refining by electricity. Simply stated, it is nothing more nor less than electric plating. The smelter bars are placed in the plating bath, and the gold is deposited in an absolutely pure state, leaving the base metals behind in solution.

It was this residue that interested the highbrow professors. The fact that platinum is frequently found with gold has been recognized ever since the science of metallurgy was in swaddling clothes; also the fact that gold and platinum have one quality in common, *i. e.*, that no single acid known will dissolve them. It takes a combination of nitric and muriatic acids to get either of these two metals in solution. Silver, on the other hand, is readily soluble in nitric acid. No one ever thought of testing a nitric acid solution of silver for the presence of platinum, because of the theory, sound as religion, that platinum could not be dissolved by nitric acid. Therefore, it was argued, if there wasn't enough silver in the solution to make it worth while to extract it, then of course there could not be any platinum; so into the sewer it went.

THE professors began to experiment. At the first step they uncovered the dusky gentleman in the woodpile. They discovered a curious fact, *i. e.*, that, while platinum alone was not soluble in nitric acid, some of its alloys with silver were soluble. For instance, a composition of five per cent. platinum in silver is readily soluble. Right there was the clue leading to the discovery that for years out of memory untold quantities of the precious metal, essential above all others in electrical manufactures, had been running into the sewer. All solutions were carefully tested. Salts of iron were added, precipitates supposedly of silver were analyzed, and since then platinum at the rate of five thousand dollars a month has been offered for sale by Uncle Sam.

It is interesting to trace the sources of this gold, in that the facts suggest that sooner or later deposits of platinum in large quantities

are going to be found. Little of the gold coming from the Western United States and Alaska contains platinum. It is found almost entirely in the gold mined in Mexico and South America. Gold from these districts is coming in larger quantities year after year. It is found, for instance, in what is popularly known as Guinea gold. Guinea gold has a peculiar luster, all its own. It is highly prized in the jewelry trade for this same peculiar color. It is safe to say that not one jewelry fancier in a hundred who prefers Guinea gold to other gold knows that this rich, almost luminous color comes from the presence of silver in a definite quantity.

There are vast reaches of wilderness in South America that, filled with miasmatic swamps and lurid savages armed with poisoned arrows, have so far resisted the advance of the white man. It seems not too much to expect that sooner or later, when these districts are exploited, platinum in large quantities will be discovered. Some Bret Harte is probably aborning now to sing the romance of Platinum Gulch. The romance of gold is founded on the very material consideration of twenty dollars and sixty-seven cents an ounce, which the Governments of the earth have decreed must be its price now and forever more. They will have to build a second-story extension on the romance of the metal that is worth twice as much as gold.

NOW that Uncle Sam is finding this mine of platinum in the supposedly unalloyed bars that the big refining companies are sending in from their smelters, the interesting question is arising, Who owns the platinum, Uncle Sam or the refiners? Uncle Sam bought their gold, refined it for them at cost, and paid them dollar for dollar out of his pocket. Actually, he was out on the transaction. Now that he has stopped the leak in his drainpipe, he is a little ahead.

Naturally, if one can play at a game, two can play at the same game. Some of the bigger smelter companies, whose output is sufficient, have undertaken the task of recovering this platinum themselves. If Uncle Sam can help out his payroll with platinum residues, there is no reason why a privately conducted smelter cannot do the same thing. So the electrical method of refining is coming more and more into use, and in the last year or two the highbrow professors in the mints who have been searching for platinum have discovered that the smelter bars sent in for coinage are almost a hundred per cent. fine, without so much as a smell of platinum in them. This has become specially true at the assay office in New York City, where Uncle Sam refines at cost, for the jewelry trade, over two hundred thousand ounces of pure gold every month.

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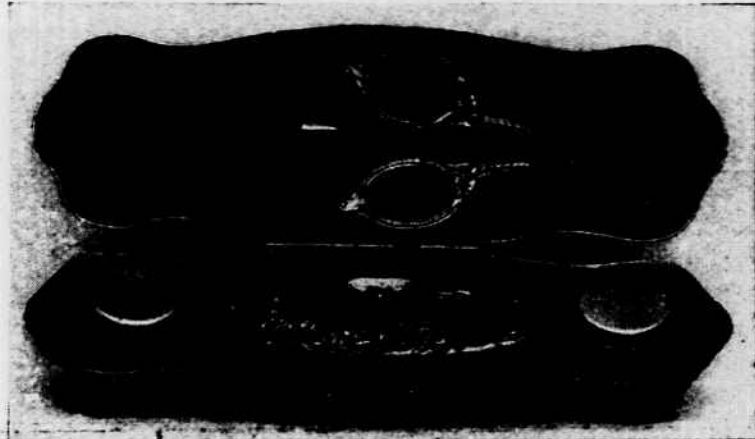
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NO OTHER WAY

BY GORDON HOLMES

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS

CLAUDE G. WAVERTON, a rich young New Yorker, became so dissolute that his wife Doris was forced to get a divorce, which was just at the time he was seriously injured in an automobile accident at Palm Beach, Florida. He recovered at the Asphodel House, where he was attended by a woman of unsavory reputation, known as Mrs. Josephine Delamar. On his return to the North, Waverton's friends were astounded at the change in him; for he had dropped all his riotous habits and become a sober, respectable man. He saved his own child from drowning at Narragansett Pier; then spurned his wife's efforts to bring about a reconciliation and departed.

Herbert W. Kyrle of Absecon, New Jersey, Mrs. Delamar's husband, was found dead (supposedly from heart failure) in a cutter off Cape May. James Leander Steingall, inspector in charge of the New York Detective Bureau, and C. F. Clancy, his chief assistant, instantly took up the case. It was found that Kyrle had been poisoned, and Clancy busied himself in running down clues at Absecon, which seemed to implicate Mrs. Delamar.

CHAPTER VI.

The Chief Takes a Hand in the Game



THE Philadelphia newspapers gave full reports of the inquest. They contained nothing sensational. The widow had mustered up courage to ask why the inquiry was adjourned; but the Coroner had stated simply that, owing to the death of a prominent inhabitant of Absecon under such unusual conditions, the authorities wished to have more time for conducting their investigations.

"Good!" said Clancy. "Dr. Gilman and the Atlantic City police played the game. Now, I have nearly a clear fortnight before me, and if, within a week, I don't know why Kyrle died, I shall think it is high time I applied for a pension."

But Clancy, though the shrewdest man in the Detective Bureau, was not omniscient, and he was many weeks older before he bade farewell to the Waverton Case and its strange side issues.

He picked up Mrs. Delamar's trail at Atlantic City readily enough. She had gone to one of the smaller hotels, taken a room there for the night as "Mrs. Foster," and had hardly been seen by anyone. The man of all work remembered, however, that "the lady in No. 10" went out about five o'clock in the evening, and did not return till a quarter to eleven. He fixed the day beyond doubt by the fact that the omnibus which brought her from the ferry collided with a motor-cyclist at the next corner after setting down the visitor at the hotel.

Here, then, in addition to two hours at Absecon, were nearly six hours of Mrs. Delamar's time unaccounted for on the evening of the day when Kyrle was last seen alive by credible witnesses. Absecon was only five miles distant—had she returned there? If so, and the testimony as to her movements happened to be fairly credible, Clancy felt that he could hardly keep the affair from the hands of the local authorities.

Perhaps he did not put forth his full powers; but, beyond the certainty of "Mrs. Foster's" departure next day, he failed to find any other trace of Mrs. Delamar at Atlantic City. So he left that part of the inquiry, and took the next ferry for Absecon, where he was hailed by the gateman.

"Hello!" said the man.

"Hello!" said Clancy.

"The party you were asking about has just gone across, Sir."

"Bound for—"

"Atlantic City, I suppose."

"Alone?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Excellent! You have my address. If you see her again, send me a line."

The detective's grim thought was, "So, Madam, you dared not stop in that haunted house another night. For all your bravado before the servants, you evidently found the owl a bird of ill omen. I wonder if you guess that other varieties of nighthawks might be able to read letters? No, I think not. But you will feel safer at Atlantic City, though your husband lies there in his coffin. Ah, well, we shall see."

CLAUDE G. WAVERTON was an uneasy spirit. From Boston he went to Quebec, from Quebec to Montreal, and from Montreal to Toronto. He remained in each town only one night. On the fifth day after he had quitted Providence—or, to be precise, on the Saturday of that same week—he announced his intention of returning to New York for a night and then heading straight to his summer home in the Adirondacks.

"I am almost forgetting what the place looks like, Rice," he said to the valet. "How long is it since we were there?"



Nothing Could Have Astonished the Detective More.

"You left in October, Sir," said Rice, whose well regulated face tried to conceal the pleasure with which he heard of his master's sudden resolve.

Like every other well trained English servant, he turned up his nose at the methods of hotels. And this drove from his mind the question why his master did not make the short journey from Montreal to Lake Champlain, if he was so anxious to reach his country home.

"Did we? Who was there last fall? Confound that rap on the head I got at Palm Beach! Every now and then my recollections of people and events jumble together in the most extraordinary way."

Rice gave a list of names, and in it figured that of John Stratton Tearle. Waverton ticked off each name with a nod, until Tearle was mentioned. Then his face grew hard, and a queer glint came into his eyes.

"Do you remember where I picked up that animal?" he asked.

Now, Rice had long since recognized that Waverton was a changed man; but he was not prepared for this scornful repudiation of a special friend and crony. He did not quarrel with the later estimate of the man,—in fact, he agreed with it thoroughly,—but it gave him a shock, nevertheless, and a hand went cautiously to his shaved upper lip.

"I believe you met him in New York, Mr. Claude," he said in his noncommittal way.

"But where, and when? Of course, I remember him well enough; but I cannot recall the circumstances of our first acquaintance. I can't have known him many years, because I believe he was in Arizona some considerable time."

"That's right, Sir. He came back from Arizona five years ago, and—"

"Well, out with it!"

"Have you forgotten your cousin, Sir?"

"Not likely, poor chap! That is just why I am wondering now why I ever took up with a scamp like Tearle. Of course, no one knows the exact facts, and my cousin's death shut down the only source from which they could emerge; but I always had my suspicions that Tearle could say a lot more about that affair than he ever disclosed, and held his tongue because his own share in it was discreditable."

Rice's sallow face actually flushed with pleasure. For an instant even he, Rice, most decorous and discreet of valets, bridged the gulf that separates master and man. "I'm very glad to hear you say that, Mr. Claude," he cried eagerly. "I always liked your namesake, Sir. Nice, affable young gentleman he was, and I couldn't believe he would ever do such things as they said about him in the newspapers. But, for all that, Mr. Tearle an' you were particular friendly before you went to Palm Beach—particular, you were!"

The valet was so unusually voluble and excited that he hardly noticed the shadow of disappointment that crossed Waverton's face for an instant; or, if noticing it, he attributed it to his insistence on the nature of the friendship between his employer and the man they were discussing.

"If I may venture to say it, Mr. Claude," he went on, "I always thought Mr. Tearle was a bad lot. If it hadn't been for him—"

Then there was a pause; for Rice was still obsessed

by the notion that Waverton might fly into one of those fits of ungovernable rage for which he was once so justly dreaded.

"Go on, Rice. I sha'n't eat you," and Waverton smiled; for he knew what was passing in the man's mind.

"Well, Sir, I'll out with it. Wasn't it that scoundrel who calls himself a gentleman who first brought you in touch with Mrs. Delamar, threw 'er at your 'ead, so to speak? Things weren't so bad between Madam an' you till 'e turned up an' brought 'er along."

IN Rice, vehemence and lack of aspirates went together; but Waverton only nodded, nor did he seem to be annoyed in the slightest degree by his faithful servant's outspokenness. For a little while he remained silent, and Rice was yielding to subdued amazement at his own temerity when his employer's comment showed that he had given more heed to the purpose underlying the valet's words than to their form.

"Before returning to New York, Rice, I want you to understand one thing clearly," he said. "I have broken off entirely with the past. I made an ass of myself for years; but all that has gone before is dead and done with, in so far as a man ever can ignore bygone evils. Now, I shall not be myself for many a long day. I do not say much about it; but I am subject to momentary illusions, and more or less serious lapses of memory are sure to occur. So I want you to help me. Whenever you see me at a loss for anything,—such, for instance, as a person's name or identity, or some little incident that I ought to remember, and forgetfulness of which may hurt or annoy anyone,—just tell me about it. I shall never resent your assistance. If I don't choose to avail myself of it, that will not be your fault. For instance, I cannot for the life of me remember where I first met this fellow Tearle."

"Oh, that's easy enough to fix, Sir. You met him at Mrs. Hemicke's house on the Hudson."

"Ah, of course. There you are—it all comes back to me now. We went from there to the races at Sheepshead Bay. What was the horse I lost such a lot of money on?"

Rice's face lengthened. This question touched a sore point. "Why, Jubilation, to be sure, Mr. Claude—Jubilation for the Brooklyn Handicap. I went down a howler over that myself."

"So you did. Never mind, Rice. We both are older and wiser, and your salary is doubled from today; so Jubilation rolls home at last. No, no thanks. I am going for a stroll in the park. Have everything ready to cross to Lewiston by the afternoon boat."

"But, Sir," and Rice was so flustered by his good fortune that he could hardly frame the question, "ave you forgotten that if we go to New York we can't very well get to The Dene before Monday?"

"I know; but I must go to New York—and then for the country. I mean to see Lake Champlain gleaming among the trees at the earliest possible moment."

Waverton threw an oddly determined note into his voice as he uttered this comparatively unimportant resolve; and Rice, busy with the continuous round of packing valises that had just been emptied, realized that he was beginning to learn his master's ways all over again.

True, Claude Waverton was invariably in his right

senses nowadays, and had been as invariably befuddled with drink in the past, and the difference between Philip drunk and Philip sober is no new thing; but the valet sometimes found himself almost wishing that his employer would take an extra glass of champagne for dinner, if only once in awhile, so as to dispel the uncanny fancy that possessed him,—that some dark magic had placed a new soul in the man's body.

ON the train between Niagara and New York, Rice was accosted by an elderly man who occupied a seat in the same section.

"Beg pardon," said the stranger, "but may I ask who the gentleman was to whom you spoke just now? He is in the Pullman car behind."

Rice was always punctilious in such matters. "That is Mr. Claude G. Waverton, and I am his valet," he answered.

"Thank you. I asked only because I met him in the Bosco Market at Montreal the other day, and he showed an extraordinary knowledge of the French-Canadian patois. Surely he cannot be the—er—gentleman who figured in a recent divorce suit?"

Rice coughed. "I don't discuss my master's affairs," he said dryly.

"Oh, of course not. Pray pardon me. The question was not meant in any derogatory sense: quite the reverse."

After that, the conversation languished; but each man was somewhat puzzled, though for widely different reasons. Rice knew little or nothing of the ways and language of French Canada; but once upon a time, not so long ago, he would have matched his lore against Waverton's for more money than he lost over jubilation.

Another small surprise awaited him in the fact that they went through to New York, where his master preferred the Ritz-Carlton Hotel to his own house on 64th-st. When Waverton was dressing for dinner he said suddenly:

"By the way, do you happen to know if Mrs. Waverton is still staying at Narragansett Pier?"

"I believe so, Mr. Claude."

A little later the other said, "You will think me a weathercock, Rice, but I shall not go to Lake Champlain till later. I shall be engaged on business all day; so, if you want the day off, it is at your disposal."

"Thank you, Sir. I am very much obliged, I'm sure."

RICE had no inkling as to the nature of the business that took his master out of the hotel on Monday after an early breakfast; but he would have been the most astonished man in New York that day had he known what really happened.

For Waverton strolled along Fifth-ave., turned into 34th-st., and entered a well known theatrical costumer's on Broadway. Here, for a fee, he was so excellently made up to represent a foreigner, presumably musical, that no one who was not a past master in the difficult art of penetrating disguises could have recognized him when he reappeared in the street, hailed a taxi, and told the man to drive to the Grand Central Station.

To save needless trouble, he had not changed trousers or boots, and, indeed, a dark wig, a flowing black mustache, blue spectacles, some stain on his face, a soft hat, and a loose-fitting alpaca coat had done marvels already. But Steingall, who had followed him from the hotel foyer, happened to be gazing into the shop window when Waverton came out, and also happened to pass the ticket office when Waverton asked for a ticket to Narragansett Pier.

So Steingall got the adjoining seat in the parlor car.

"Pity Clancy couldn't have done this!" he muttered. "If it means more than a day, I shall wire for him, as I cannot spare the time. But it is certainly interesting, exceedingly interesting—and Clancy wanted to keep an eye on Mrs. Delamar this morning. Of the two, I think I have drawn today's winning number in the lottery."

CHAPTER VII. Wherein Steingall Is Staggered

WHEN in the train the chief had plenty of time to review the queer mixture of sordid fact and sensational melodrama that was taking shape in his mind under a general classification as "The Waverton Suit." A strict training of twenty years in his profession had taught him to beware of jumping at conclusions, a piece of mental gymnastics that Clancy's peculiar genius accomplished with almost unflinching accuracy. But it was a wholly different thing to reach certain conclusions by following rules of evidence that were acquiring, in their way, the rigidity of a proposition in geometry, and it was now established beyond doubt that two women and two men were more or less bound up in events that led not only to a divorce, but to the death of a third man, Kyrle.

Moreover, it was impossible to resist the suspicion that Waverton was going in disguise to Narragansett Pier in order to spy upon his wife. Commonsense urged that he had heard rumors of the attentions paid to Mrs. Waverton by John Stratton Tearle, and that he went to verify them. Yet commonsense asked in vain why he should wish to do any such thing.

He had not defended the divorce suit. He had acted as if he was heartily glad to be rid of his lawful spouse. He was the sort of person who might be expected to guffaw loudly if told that she was consoling herself already. Why, then, should he be anxious to obtain information as to her conduct and probable future intentions before the divorce was two months old?

Steingall wrestled with the problem for at least five minutes. When the self-evident solution occurred to him, he looked so disgusted that a man sitting next the window said apologetically:

"I am afraid the car is rather stuffy; but I dare

not have the window wide open, for fear of pneumonia."

The detective recovered his wits instantly. "I think there is plenty of air," he assured his fellow traveler with a smile. "In fact, I was just regretting that I had no time to take a Turkish bath before leaving New York, and this is an excellent substitute."

His neighbor laughed. "Glad you're pleased," he said. "My choice lies between being roasted and cremated; so I chose the roasting."

A desultory conversation was maintained all the way to New Haven, where Steingall had a good excuse for stretching his legs in search of fresh air, and thus making sure that his quarry was not planning to leave the train en route. But the masquerading Waverton was lounging half asleep—or apparently so—in a comfortable chair in a parlor car, and Steingall, when nipping the end off a cigar, realized that if the expression on his own face could so mislead a chance observer as to its cause, he himself might have analyzed Waverton's motives wrongly.

"Well," said he philosophically, "the political maxim of the hour is 'Watch Roosevelt!' It's up to me to watch Waverton, and see that he doesn't steal a march on me between here and the next place."

ON arriving at Narragansett Pier, Waverton deposited a small parcel (his discarded clothing, Steingall imagined) in the baggage room; then he took a seat in a hotel bus.

Steingall hired an open rig, and told the driver merely



The Question Gave Rice a Shock.

to jog along about a hundred yards behind the bus. In this fashion Narragansett was entered. Halfway down the main street Waverton alighted from the bus and entered a restaurant of the quick-lunch variety. Curly Waverton in a five-cent establishment during the luncheon hour! Certainly wonders would never cease—or were, in fact, just beginning!

The detective paid off his cab a little farther on, bought some bananas and fruit, and lunched frugally but well. He was still munching contentedly when Waverton reappeared and unconsciously led the way in this procession of two to the seafront. Here he took up a position with his back to the sea, and quite obviously eyed the porch of the hotel he had left so unceremoniously eight days earlier.

Even if he had not glanced frequently at his watch, there was no room left for doubt now as to the purpose of his visit to the Rhode Island resort. The weather was fine. It was practically certain that Mrs. Waverton and Mrs. Daunt, with the nurse and baby, would either drive or walk this tempting afternoon, and Claude Waverton had come to watch them; perhaps, in some way, to annoy them.

Steingall racked his brains for the subtle and certain

theory that Clancy's nimble wits would unquestionably have supplied long since. Much as he liked Clancy, he was nettled sometimes by the little man's omniscience. Very well—suppose Clancy were standing in his (Steingall's) shoes, how would he explain this minor but baffling mystery?

Of course, if Waverton meant only to waylay his wife, and by some public scandal prevent Mrs. Delamar from pestering him in regard to marriage, he was acting as the unspeakable blackguard that Mrs. Waverton's lawyer had painted him.

But Steingall had more faith in Clancy's cool-headed opinion than in forensic eloquence, and the diminutive detective had spoken well of Waverton, had described him as a "gentleman," had even expressed his surprise that he could ever have been guilty of the conduct ascribed to him.

Could there be something in the changed manner and habits that Waverton seemed to have acquired since his accident? Was he anxious now to rehabilitate himself with his charming wife? No, that hardly accounted for his actions, because Fate could have devised no more favorable circumstance in this direction than the very mishap to the child in which he had distinguished himself; yet he had fled from Narragansett forthwith as if the place were plague-stricken!

Ah, the child! Steingall had given no thought to her. Was Waverton fool enough to dream of kidnapping her? Such incidents were not uncommon; though they often arose more from hatred of the parent favored by the law than from love of the offspring in dispute. Besides, no question had been raised concerning the custody of little Kathleen. Usually, in such cases, there are provisions as to "access" and such like legal formalities; but the man now lounging in an absurd though effective disguise on the promenade had not thought fit to lift a finger in the matter when the opportunity served.

True, this callous attitude was adopted in preaccident days; but Steingall put small faith in conversions effected by illness, for he agreed with the satirist in the couplet:

The devil was sick,—the devil a monk would be;
The devil was well,—the devil a monk was he.

AND now there was a move. People were emerging from the hotel in twos and threes, and at last two women, accompanied by a Normandy nurse leading a pretty little girl, came out into the sunshine, and descended a flight of steps leading to the roadway.

Arrived there, they hesitated a moment. Apparently Mrs. Waverton disliked the notion of going to the Casino to listen to the band. However, Mrs. Daunt's smiling remonstrances prevailed, and the four strolled up to the gates.

They passed directly in front of the nondescript foreigner, and Steingall discovered at once that Waverton was much more interested in his wife than in any other member of the quartet.

Of course, the detective was only guessing the identity of the two women. He had never before seen Mrs. Waverton or her sister; but their resemblance to each other, and the presence of Celestine with Kathleen, dispelled any doubt on that score. Indeed, when they were so near that he could hear each word they uttered, Mrs. Waverton said to the child, whose eyes had turned toward the rocks:

"Remember, Kathleen, if ever you get your frock wetted again by salt water, you will be taken straight home and put to bed!"

Mrs. Daunt smiled into the little girl's uplifted eyes. "I am sure Kathleen does not like taking a bath with her clothes on," she said.

Steingall, unobtrusively gazing his fill at them, marveled at the folly of the man who had thrust out of his life this beautiful and gracious woman; while, to one fond of children, it was difficult to understand how the father of such a dainty little maid as Kathleen could endure to be parted from her forever of his own free will.

But here was a long-haired and alpaca-coated foreigner buying a ticket of admission to the Casino, although he did enter at once; so the detective turned away. The change of position brought his eyes to the hotel, though he noted Waverton's movements, and he became aware of another person who was interested in the progress of the women. This was a tall, well-groomed man, of imposing appearance and dignified carriage, who was standing in the veranda.

"Tearle, for a dollar!" chuckled Steingall. "Now something ought to happen. Clancy will writhe with anguish when I tell him of today's doings."

Clancy certainly did writhe; but not with anguish. Steingall's recital caused him intense mirth; though, for once, in a way, owing to developments that transpired presently, the Little Fellow was as mystified as the Big Fellow.

THE women bowed to the doorman of the Casino and passed in with the maid and child. Mrs. Waverton chose a sheltered seat on the lawn, away from the band, where the child could run about in safety, but remain constantly under observation. Steingall stood fast in his original position, and Waverton, apparently not trusting too implicitly to his makeup, hesitated before he passed into the building.

He too allowed his glance to travel toward the hotel, where Tearle was now descending the steps. Instantly he walked back quickly across the roadway and bought a cheap-looking stick from a vender, and surprised Steingall by conversing earnestly with the man at the door. Just as Tearle entered—he apparently had a season ticket, and was known—Waverton followed.

Then, by some mischance, Tearle tripped badly, and sprawled at full length before the gay company in the Casino. The foreigner rushed to his assistance, and was profuse in gesticulations and seeming apologies; but

Tearle cursed him heartily and began to climb the steps again, for not only were his clothes soiled, but he had split his gloves, burst a few buttons, and torn the knees of his trousers.

Plenty of people saw the accident; but Steingall was the only onlooker who realized that Waverton had deliberately brought the other man to earth by thrusting the stick neatly between his ankles. The purchase of the stick on the spur of the moment was an inspiration; but its effective use was masterly. It demanded a cool nerve, a steady eye, a firm wrist, and an expert knowledge of the exact sort of thrust that would inevitably result in its recipient's fall. From that instant Steingall's appreciation of the ne'er-do-well's qualities mounted rapidly. It was destined to reach a higher point ere he saw the lights of New York.

While Tearle limped back to the hotel, the cause of his discomfort made off in the direction of the older part of the town west of the Casino. Soon, however, he was back again, paid for readmission, and resumed his unobtrusive scrutiny of Mrs. Waverton and her companions.

By this time Steingall had shifted from his first position. He reasoned that a man who could plan and

achieve the coup that placed John Stratton Tearle on the sick list so promptly had brains enough to perceive the marked attentions of a stranger, especially as he himself was playing the spy. Soon the detective quitted the Casino altogether, and lounged along the front. There he remained until the women returned to the hotel with the child and her nurse.

All this time the long-haired foreigner had remained near them. He watched their slow progress from pier to hotel, consulted his watch when they had vanished, and then walked briskly into town. There he hired a vehicle, was driven to the station, claimed his parcel, and then took train for New York. Steingall followed. Apparently Waverton was unconscious of his presence.

THIS tame conclusion of an episode that had opened with such promise puzzled Steingall considerably. It also annoyed him. From a safe distance he glowered at Waverton with big blue eyes that darted the lightning of wrath and bewilderment.

When at last Waverton boarded a parlor car of the New York Express, Steingall determined to adopt heroic measures. He waited until the train was on the point of leaving, and then dashed breathlessly into the car oc-

cupied by the man who had led him such a dance apparently to no purpose. Waverton had vanished; but the detective ran him to earth in the smoking compartment, and the two men had it to themselves.

"Gee!" said Steingall cheerfully, opening his cigar case, "that was a close shave. Another minute and I should have lost it."

"Why?" came the disconcerting question, and Waverton, who had removed his spectacles, looked him straight in the face with steel-gray eyes that were hardly in keeping with his black wig and fiercely Continental mustaches.

"Why?" echoed Steingall, smiling blandly. "Because this train was on time—and I was late."

"But I am under the impression that you were in the depot a quarter of an hour ago?"

There was no attempt now at an accent, nor any of the expressive play of hands and features with which he had sought to mollify the injured Tearle. He spoke in his ordinary tone, and the smooth, easy enunciation of an American of good breeding came oddly from the lips of this ultraforeigner.

The detective, no novice in a game that demanded

Continued on page 16

JENNY AND CATULLUS

By HELEN COALE CREW



The Door Opened and a Basket Entered.

THE professor leaned his head wearily upon his hand. A long beam of chill March sunshine, gleaming but without warmth, drew itself slowly across his desk, velvet footed. Already its farthest edge had slipped away from the pile of papers before him, and the row of shabby books beyond was engulfed in gloom.

On his right, however, in the full sunshine, its gilt lettering flashing back the light, lay his book, fresh from the press; an edition of Catullus, with copious notes, and a facsimile in the front of a page from a medieval manuscript of that "tenderest of Roman poets." The glittering title caught the professor's eye, and for an instant his gloom lifted. He laid his hand affectionately upon the volume. What love, what labor, had gone into the preparation of the book, what long evenings and all too quickly passing days! He opened the volume at random, and read a vivid page filled with the poet's youthful ardor:

Let us live, let us love, my Lesbia, before our brief sun sets forever and we lie down to our long sleeping! Never mind the graybeards: let us clasp and kiss a hundred, a thousand, times!

The sunlight slipped from the edge of the desk to the floor, where it crept away inch by inch, like a living thing, and slowly climbed the farther wall. The professor watched it with fascinated eyes. Outside the bare trees, covered with an icy coating, chafed and fretted in the cold March wind. "Before our brief sun sets forever!" A timely warning; for he was fast leaving his youth behind him. There were silver streaks in his thick locks, and lines about his eyes and mouth. "I am growing old!" he thought, and shivered. The sunlight, quivering upon the ceiling, trembled, paled, and slipped away among the shadows. Then there came a knock at the door.

"Come in," said the professor.

The door opened, and a basket entered, pushed from behind. Presently the propelling power appeared, out of breath with climbing the stairs,—a thin, elfish looking child of twelve, her bosom panting under the folds of a big plaid shawl.

"Oh, it's you, is it, Jenny?" asked the professor.

"Course. Who'd you think it was?"

"Why, I suppose I thought it was you."

"Then you can't be as s'prised as you sound," said

Jenny. She lifted one of the neatly wrapped bundles from the basket and laid it on the corner of the desk. "There's your wash. Ma's a day late, 'cause she had to do Miss Marvin's party waist. It takes an awful time to do a party waist, 'count o' the ruffles an' tucks. Ma says she's awful glad men don't have ruffles to their clothes."

She stooped to drag her basket away; but the professor stopped her. "Wait a minute, Jenny," he said.

Jenny straightened up her lean little figure and stuck her arms akimbo. The professor tapped on his desk with nervous fingers and gazed abstractedly out the window.

"I'm a waitin'," reminded Jenny.

"Oh, yes. Well—how old are you, Jenny?"

"Goin' on thirteen. What are you goin' on?"

A sudden smile lit up the grave features; a most illuminating smile, showing depths of humor unguessed at. "Jenny," he said, "you have anticipated me. Women are so quick! I was leading slowly up to the point you have jumped at. How old do you think I am?"

Jenny looked him over. "That depends," she said.

"Depends?"

"Yes. When you sit hunched up over your desk that way, you look about a hundred; but I've seen you look younger."

"Oh, you have! When, if you please?" He straightened up briskly as he spoke.

"When you're walkin' along o' Miss Marvin on the campus. She's a quick one. You have to hustle to keep up with her, and somehow or 'nother it makes you look a deal youthfuller. Ma says all you need is somebody to keep you hustlin'."

A great wave of angry red swept over the professor's face, and his hands tingled. So they talked him over, did they, his washerwoman and this uncanny child of hers?

"Clear out!" he said sharply.

"Yes, I was just a goin' to. I can't stand here foolin' away time any longer," said Jenny. She pushed the basket quickly out into the hall and closed the door behind her. The volume of Catullus, aimed at her retreating figure, crashed against the door and fell to the floor.

THE professor strode rapidly up and down the room. Old! He? Never! His heart was pounding, his blood racing. Why, man alive, he wouldn't be forty for nearly five months! All the Oslers in the world couldn't make an old man of him so long as he felt like this! How had he got into such a despondent mood, anyway? Well, he would take a brace. He could still hustle, if that was such a desirable thing to do, and without any help, either!

He stopped in his busy stride to undo the bundle left by Jenny and put away the clothes in a drawer in his bedroom.

"Me hercule!" he muttered in astonishment.

Before him lay the whitest, softest, of garments. From throat to waistband ran innumerable cascades of ruffles which stirred lightly beneath his breath, and where the ruffles ended tucks began, and when the tucks gave out from sheer plethora lace stepped in. The professor turned on all the electric lights. He touched the dainty garment with cautious hand, and a wave of motion ran along every filmy fold, and the softly curving ruffles clung about his fingers. He

drew his hand away quickly, abashed, and began his stride again. When his foot kicked against the book lying open and crushed near the door, he picked up the volume and smoothed out the leaves. "Let us live, let us love, my Lesbia!" How the words leaped out from the page! Ah, to have a Lesbia! Surely that would insure immortal youth! He turned again to the desk and looked at the softly feminine, mystery-breathing waist.

"It is hers!" he said with conviction. Yet one would never suspect that a Roman girl had ever worn so elaborate a garment.

SIX o'clock. Angela Marvin put her microscope away in its case and her slides and tools in the table drawer. The undergraduates had left the laboratory an hour ago. She had sighed wistfully at the cheerful alacrity with which they had put away their apparatus, and had glanced with something of envy at the fresh young faces. To her, the opportunity for a college education had come late, and now she was a special student giving some hours to assisting in the laboratory. She made her way slowly through the empty building and out upon the darkening streets of the university town, where already lights were gleaming in many windows.

She must hurry or she would be late for dinner. She turned her back to the cold, gray expanse of Lake Michigan, and went west along Library-st. The sharp air brought a glow to her cheeks, and she walked quickly though cautiously along the icy sidewalk. The day had been a trying one. The odor of the rabbit she was dissecting clung to her memory. She had gashed her finger, like any careless girl, on the microscope, and was weary with a long afternoon spent in directing the students' work.

Presently the boarding house loomed heavily just ahead. Ah, if she only had a home to go to! She was homesick, that was the trouble. Would she ever have a home of her own? Not likely. A home of one's own



"When You Sit that Way You Look a Hundred."

NO OTHER WAY

Continued from page 15

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the quick exercise of his wits, answered readily.

"Quite true," he said. "I had so much time at my disposal that I failed to note how it was passing, and found myself absurdly hurried when I went to buy a ticket. Do you smoke? Will you join me in a cigar?"

"Willingly," said Waverton, taking the proffered case. Then he glanced at the big man with a pleasant smile. "You don't look like a nervous subject," he said. "You will not be alarmed, I hope, if I effect some marked changes in my personal appearance?"

Few sentences in the English language could have astonished Steingall so greatly as those simple words. It certainly needed no effort to simulate the wonder that crept into his voice. "By all means," he said; "though I hardly understand—"

"Oh, I'll soon show you. I have worn these beastly things all day, and am sick of them!"

Throwing aside the felt hat, Waverton took off the close-fitting wig. Then he tried to remove the mustaches; but they were stuck to his upper lip, and could not be shed so expeditiously. He laughed at the blank amazement depicted in Steingall's face; though he was far from comprehending its true explanation.

"The fellow who made me up gave me some composition to rub into this confounded encumbrance," he said. "I think I shall have a wash. You will meet quite a different person when I emerge. I'll not light up until I am myself again." And with that he took the parcel and vanished.

WELL! muttered Steingall, blowing rings of smoke as was his way when profoundly stirred, "I have met some refrigerators in my time, and have seen some strange things; but this beats any cold storage proposition I've ever come across!"

Within five minutes Waverton was back in his place, an alert, soldierly-looking man whose care-lined brow and iron-gray hair gave him an appearance of more years than the thirty-three with which he was credited in the police record. He had washed the color off his face, and was now wearing his ordinary coat and straw hat. Obviously, the parcel had changed contents.

But during that short respite Steingall had been thinking furiously; and if Clancy was a Talleyrand in divining other men's motives, Steingall was a Bismarck in unmasking them. As Waverton was lighting the cigar the detective brought out his cardcase. "It will put matters on the square if I tell you who I am," he said. "Will you look at this card?"

Waverton did look. He looked long and earnestly; but Steingall could not see any sign of disturbance in his face. Not an eyelid quivered; though a man who had just shed a disguise under such peculiar conditions might well feel disconcerted when he found himself in the presence of the chief of the New York Detective Bureau. But Waverton puffed steadily at the cigar, and there was a glint of humor in the eyes he raised at last to Steingall's.

"You carry an excellent brand of cigars," he said. "Will you tell me where you get them, and I will jot down the address on your card."

"Allow me to write it for you," said Steingall, with equal nonchalance, and, after scribbling the name of a firm beneath his own, he wrote on the upper space, "To introduce Mr. Claude G. Waverton."

"I fancy you will be able to read this scrawl," he went on; "though writing in a train is an art I do not excel in."

The other took the card again. "It is quite legible," he said, after a slight pause. "I am very much obliged to you. I shall order some of these cigars tomorrow."

Steingall felt as a master at arms might feel when his deadliest stroke had been deftly turned aside by a stranger's rapier. He almost sighed in his disappointment, because now he was compelled to adopt cruder methods.

"So you intend to remain in New York, Mr. Waverton?" he said.

"I am going to my home in the Adirondacks tomorrow."

"Since you know who I am, have you any objection to answering a few questions?"

"Knowing who you are, need they be put? I don't wish to appear uncivil, especially after you have given me such a first-rate Havana; but I assume that you followed me from New York, and have—what shall I say?—kept in touch with me all day, so you are as well posted in my movements as I am myself."

Steingall was fully aware that he was be-

ing played with in this duel of words, and his blue eyes glinted with some of the fire that sparkled in the steel-gray ones that met his gaze unflinchingly.

"If any charge that had its scene in New York since nine o'clock this morning were preferred against you, Mr. Waverton, you would have in me a credible witness for proving an alibi," he said. "I am not nearly so interested in your actions today as in their motive. I think you would like me to speak plainly. A man with whom you must have some acquaintance, at least by repute if not personally, a Mr. Kyrle, of Absecon, has been found dead in peculiar circumstances. The police are inquiring into the affair, seeing that Mr. Kyrle and his wife were not on the best of terms with each other, and it is only reasonable to suppose that we should wish to clear up the lady's movements during the few days prior to her husband's death. Next to her, naturally, we are interested in her associates. Of course, you may decline to assist me in the matter. I cannot demand your help, and, if you look on my presence here as an intrusion, I shall transfer myself to another car."

"You talk as if you were rather vexed with me, Mr. Steingall," said Waverton calmly.

"No, Sir, not vexed; merely precise. You would have good cause to be annoyed with me if I had sought information under false pretenses."

"Suppose I had retained my disguise, what would have happened?"

"Then, as you would not be Mr. Claude G. Waverton, but apparently a German violinist, I should have remained your casual acquaintance of a railway journey."

THAT'S candid, not to say ingenuous. Now, I have nothing to conceal. The worst is known already,—the newspapers took care of that,—and, as I told your colleague Mr. Clancy, with the exception of a brief meeting in New York, I have not seen or spoken to Mrs. Delamar since I quitted her house at Palm Beach. That statement is literally true. What else do you wish to know?"

"Why did you visit Narragansett Pier to day?"

"Obviously, to see my wife; yet without her cognizance."

"Pray forgive me if I am treading on delicate ground—did you also expect to see Mr. John Stratton Tearle?"

"No."

Steingall permitted himself to appear astonished. "But you dealt with him very promptly when he put in an appearance," he said.

"Knowing the man as I do, I was not long in forming an opinion as to the object of his presence; so I decided to free Mrs. Waverton and her sister from his attractive company, even if for no more than during one afternoon."

"You succeeded admirably. Allow me to congratulate you on the means. Was it jiu jitsu, or the savate?"

"Neither. It was—the invention of the moment, I suppose."

Waverton seemed to catch his tongue in the very act of tripping, and the detective began instantly to speculate as to the nature of the missing word. He racked his brains for a solution all the way to New York, and when he told Clancy of that trivial hiatus the little man pounced on it as the really important event of the day. But he did not permit the conversation to languish or that account.

"You are aware, I take it, Sir, that Mr. Tearle and Mrs. Delamar are close acquaintances, to put it mildly?" he said.

"Oh, yes. He introduced me to the lady in the first instance."

"You speak bitterly of him; yet he was your intimate friend."

Waverton's left hand brushed his eyes and forehead with the gesture of a man who tries to dispel a distasteful memory. "That has passed," he said wearily. "Since my accident, with its enforced seclusion,—and proper diet,—my mind seems to have entered into a new arena. To vary the metaphor and adopt an older one, I have turned over a new leaf. Some black marks still show through the thin paper; but I am endeavoring to obliterate them. At any rate, Inspector, you gentlemen of the bureau need not waste your time in shadowing me. I am prepared now and always to give you every assistance that lies in my power. Unhappily, it is very slight. I know no more of Mr. Kyrle's death than the facts recorded in the press; while my knowledge of his wife's actions and whereabouts during the last two months is practically nil. I am a discredited

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man, and I ask nothing better than to be allowed to pass a year or more in the privacy of my home on Lake Champlain. But there is one thing I am intensely anxious about. Mrs. Waverton has been treated vilely, and I mean to save her from a repetition of the misery for which I hold myself solely responsible. So this creature Tearle must be warned off. He is a rascal and blackguard, and I shall take all possible means to protect my—my onetime wife from him. If, in the course of your inquiries, you find that he remains deaf to the warning I shall give him personally, I hope it will not conflict with your official duties to let me know what is going on."

Steingall actually whistled. "We become allies, then!" he cried.

"Exactly. I have been the prey of a harpy. My—Mrs. Waverton must be protected from one."

The chief had a heart well adapted to the requirements of a generous frame. It was large, and sound, and full blooded, and he would have staked his professional reputation now that this man had been more sinned against than sinning. He leaned forward, a hand on each firm and well rounded knee. "I know a bit about the world, and human nature, and woman's nature in particular," he said gently. "Now, it seems to me that if you had only met Mrs. Waverton after you had rescued the child—if you even met her tomorrow, or next week—"

But Waverton broke in, with a curious stiffening of lip and voice. "What you are suggesting is impossible, absolutely impossible!" he said.

Still Steingall persisted. He had seen the impossible accomplished in his experience more than once. "There may be no other way," he said.

"I shall find one. That way is closed—closed forever."

GREAT SCOTT!" said Steingall, recounting the incident to Clancy later, "he not only closed the door, but slammed and bolted it. Yet, come to think about it, he never really told me why he went to Narragansett Pier, did he?"

"No," growled Clancy. "Some day, quite soon, I shall tell him why he went. And I shall tell him that missing word too. And he won't like the telling, I promise you! Name of a good little gray man! how he will squirm!"

To be continued next Sunday

EATING ONE'S WORDS

DURING this campaign year we shall hear, no doubt, of men eating their own words, or at least being admonished so to do. "Eating one's own words" is not so fanciful as it sounds: there have been cases where the feat was compelled.

"Ingoldsby" Barham, in his Memoirs, relates a not very brilliant joke which he ascribes to his friend Edward Walpole, lamenting at the same time that it has been "unfairly attributed" to James Smith.

Having been told that the confectioners had a way of discharging the ink from old parchment by a chemical process, and then making the parchment into isinglass for their jellies, Edward Walpole replied with apt readiness, "Then I find a man may now eat his deeds as well as his words."

'Twas only the metaphorical eating of words, however, that Walpole had in mind. Isaac Volmar possibly saw no humor in the command issued by Bernard, Duke of Saxony, that he should be forced to eat the manuscript of some poetical satires he had written against his Lordship, and the enforcement of the order probably went much against his stomach, even though the satires were described as "spicy" by the historian.

Nor was it a matter of laughter to the jurist Philip Oldenburger when he was condemned to eat a pamphlet of his own composition, and had the lesson emphasized by a good stiff flogging.

ARVINE'S "Dictionary of Anecdotes" (Boston, 1860) quotes from some unnamed traveler a detailed account of how an unfortunate Russian author submitted to a similar penalty at Moscow. He had published a quarto volume on "The Liberties of the People," and had taken occasion to inveigh against the venality of the bureaucrats and even question the conduct of the autocrat himself. Naturally, the author was taken into custody.

"After being tried in a summary way," continued the traveler, "his production was deemed to be a libel, and he was condemned to eat his own words. The singularity of such a sentence induced me to see it put into execution. A scaffold was erected in one of

the most public streets of the city. The imperial provost, the magistrates, the physicians and surgeons, attended. The book was separated from the binding, the margin cut off, and every leaf rolled up like a lottery ticket when taken out of the wheel. The author was then served with them, leaf by leaf, by the provost, who put them into his mouth, to the no small diversion of the spectators; and he was obliged to swallow this unpalatable food on pain of the knout,—in Russia more feared than death.

"As soon as the medical gentlemen were of opinion that he had received into his stomach as much at a time as was consistent with his safety, the transgressor was sent back to prison, and the business was resumed the two following days. In three very hearty but unpleasant meals every leaf of the book was actually swallowed."

IT must be bad enough to eat your own words: to eat the words of others lacks every possible element of poetical justice. Yet in 1370 Barnabo Visconti compelled two papal delegates to eat the parchment bull of excommunication whereof they were merely the bearers, together with its silk cords and wax seals.

There is an impish humor in the conduct of a certain Austrian general mentioned by Oelrich in his "Dissertatio de Bibliothecarum et Librorum Fatis" (1756). This officer had signed a note for two thousand florins, and when it fell due and was presented to him by his creditors he forced those men at the pistol point to eat it.

To close with an instance that belongs to the spacious times of Queen Elizabeth. Tom Nash, defending the memory of his recently deceased friend, Robert Greene, from the aspersions of Gabriel Harvey, thus berates the latter, "Had he lived, Gabriel, and thou shouldst unartificially and odiously libel against him as thou hast done, he would have made thee an example of ignominy to all ages that are to come, and driven thee to eat thy own book buttered, as I saw him make an apparition once in a tavern eat his citation, wax and all, very handsomely served 'twixt two dishes."

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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS

CLAUDE G. WAVERTON, a rich young New Yorker, became so dissolute that his wife Doris was forced to get a divorce, which was just at the time he was seriously injured in an automobile accident at Palm Beach, Florida. He recovered at the Asphodel House, where he was attended by a woman of unsavory reputation, known as Mrs. Josephine Delamar. On his return to the North, Waverton's friends were astounded at the change in him: for he had dropped all his riotous habits and become a sober, respectable man. He saved his own child from drowning at Narragansett Pier; then spurned his wife's efforts to bring about a reconciliation and departed.

Herbert W. Kyrle of Absecon, New Jersey, Mrs. Delamar's husband, was found dead (supposedly from heart failure) in a cutter off Cape May. James Leander Steingall, inspector in charge of the New York Detective Bureau and C. F. Clancy, his chief assistant, instantly took up the case. It was found that Kyrle had been poisoned, and Clancy busied himself in running down clues at Absecon, which seemed to implicate Mrs. Delamar.

CHAPTER VIII. Close Quarters

AFTER that slamming and bolting of the door of reconciliation, the talk in the train died away. Steingall began to chat about other matters, hoping to draw out his strange companion, and take his measure more completely by interchange of ideas and reminiscences; but Waverton, pleading fatigue, dozed for an hour or longer.

He was not feigning sleep. Obviously, he was still enfeebled by the injuries he had received in the accident, and the activities of the day had exhausted him. So Steingall could only seize the opportunity to study an interesting face; and this, to be sure, he did thoroughly. The strange outcome was that the closer he analyzed Waverton's characteristics as portrayed in his worn features, the less he understood how Mrs. Delamar had contrived to ruin such a life. He failed completely to read into the strong, stern, self-reliant lineaments the indelible records of a roué, a drunkard, a jaded patron of the prize ring and haunter of the degraded circles that pander to the idle and dissolute in New York and the rest of the world's capitals. Illness has a pathos and a dignity of its own; but it cannot efface the traces of vicious years. Yet Claude Waverton bore closer resemblance to one who had fought through a long and arduous campaign than to the dissolute ne'er-do-well whose evil repute was almost worldwide.

In fact, Steingall summed him up exactly as Clancy had done, and the extraordinary thought intruded itself, "Is he the same man?"

There could be no doubt of it, and the detective frowned at the nonsense he was indulging in. Mrs. Waverton, the French nurse, the servants at 64th-st., Rice (who had been Waverton's valet for seven years), the family lawyer (with whom Waverton must have been in constant communication of late),—none of these people had questioned his identity. Then, there remained Mrs. Delamar and Tearle, intimate acquaintances of the last twelve months, whose fortunes were bound up so curiously with Waverton's,—the notion had never entered their minds that the hero of so many wild escapades and the worn, tired man now nestling in a corner of the car were not one and the same person.

Steingall laughed softly to himself. "Guess it's a clear case of metamorphosis," he said. Then his brows wrinkled again; though he chuckled at some conceit that had occurred to him.

At New York it was Waverton who showed the greater self-possession. Steingall was about to bid him goodnight, when the other caught his arm.

"By the way," he said, "are you taking a taxi?"

"Yes."

"Good! You shall drop me at my hotel. Thus do I revenge myself for being regarded as a suspicious person. I waste your day, smoke your cigars,—by the way, let me have another,—and use your cab. Do you always treat criminals in this lordly way, Inspector?"

"If they conduct themselves well, Mr. Waverton," and Steingall grinned at the humor of the situation.

TALKING matters over with Clancy, he reverted to the singular contrariety of Claude Waverton's present manners and past history.

"Summing him up while he slept in the train," he said, "I called it a case of metamorphosis. One uses such terms loosely. Can you tell me just what metamorphosis means?"

"Yes," cackled Clancy. "It means exactly the opposite to that which you think it means. The word you wanted was metempsychosis."

"Oh, was it? Then perhaps you will be good enough to carry the correction a stage further."

"Metempsychosis implies the passing of a man's soul after death into some other body."

"Excellent! Let's put that in our diary. The joke will explain itself when we watch the Commissioner's face while he reads it."

"Commissioners are unimaginative mortals, or they would not be chosen for the job," snapped Clancy. "It is my firm belief that when Waverton was hammered into insensibility against the rocks at Palm Beach—

probably they were metamorphic rocks so you were 'warm,' as children say—his soul quitted his body for a time, and some prowling spook jumped the claim. How else can you account for the change in the creature? A Frenchman named Duchesne has a theory—"

"Look here!" said Steingall, waving a fat hand impatiently. "This thing is getting on my nerves. We are being surfeited with wonders, but facts are uncommonly scarce. The Waverton divorce has no concern for us except in its bearings on the death of Kyrle, and there we have to depend on the diary, the doctor's analysis, and some cigarettes, either whole or in part. The clues are substantial enough in their way, and they are backed by a strong motive; but, somehow, I seem to feel a clot of blood pressing on my brain when I begin to construct theories from the material at command. Mrs. Delamar is a clever woman, and I cannot bring myself to believe that she would deliberately build up evidence against herself. Then, she must still be pretty sure of marrying Waverton, notwithstanding the interview in the Waldorf-Astoria, or she would not have written Tearle in such determined strain. Yet we have Waverton himself vowing by all the gods that he will have none of Mrs. Delamar, and fiercely intent on spoiling Tearle's little game with his wife, whom he seems to venerate and detest in the same breath. What do you make of it?"

"Detest?" Clancy's eyebrows curved. "I am choosing my words badly: I am tired, I suppose." "Doctors call it logomania, one of the early symptoms of general paralysis of the insane."

"I wish you wouldn't try to be funny at this hour. If Waverton doesn't detest his wife, he avoids her, shuns her, will listen to no suggestion of burying the hatchet." Then Clancy leaned forward over the table at which they were sitting, and propped his sharp chin on his clenched fists. "Now listen to me, Inspector Steingall!" he said. "You are top dog in our crowd, because you own everyday, Uncle Sam, commonsense ideas, and they carry you in a straight line so long as you don't enter my domain, which is that of the dreamer. While you followed your own methods you were keen on the Waverton suit as holding the key of the whole situation. You were right. Then you endeavor to clothe your robust form in my mantle of fantasy, and forthwith you abandon the true and direct trail you have nosed since the inquiry opened. That is where you are going wrong. Of course, a night's sleep will cure you; but why waste a night? Can I have a week's vacation?"

"What are you driving at?" demanded Steingall, almost morosely; for none knew better than himself how unerringly Clancy had found the weak spot in his armor. "I really meant what I said. I want a couple of weeks off. Five days may suffice; but I had better stipulate

for a longer time. You see, I can hardly ask the department to sanction a trip to Palm Beach, and I am going there. I shall return in time for the adjourned inquest."

"And what in the world do you expect to find at Palm Beach?"

"Of course, the name covers an area as well as a multitude of sins. For present purposes it stretches from the Asphodel House at Palm Beach to Schwartz's private casino at Boynton,—about nine miles as the crow flies; but nearer fourteen by automobile."

"Oh, I see. Well, have it your own way. When do you start?"

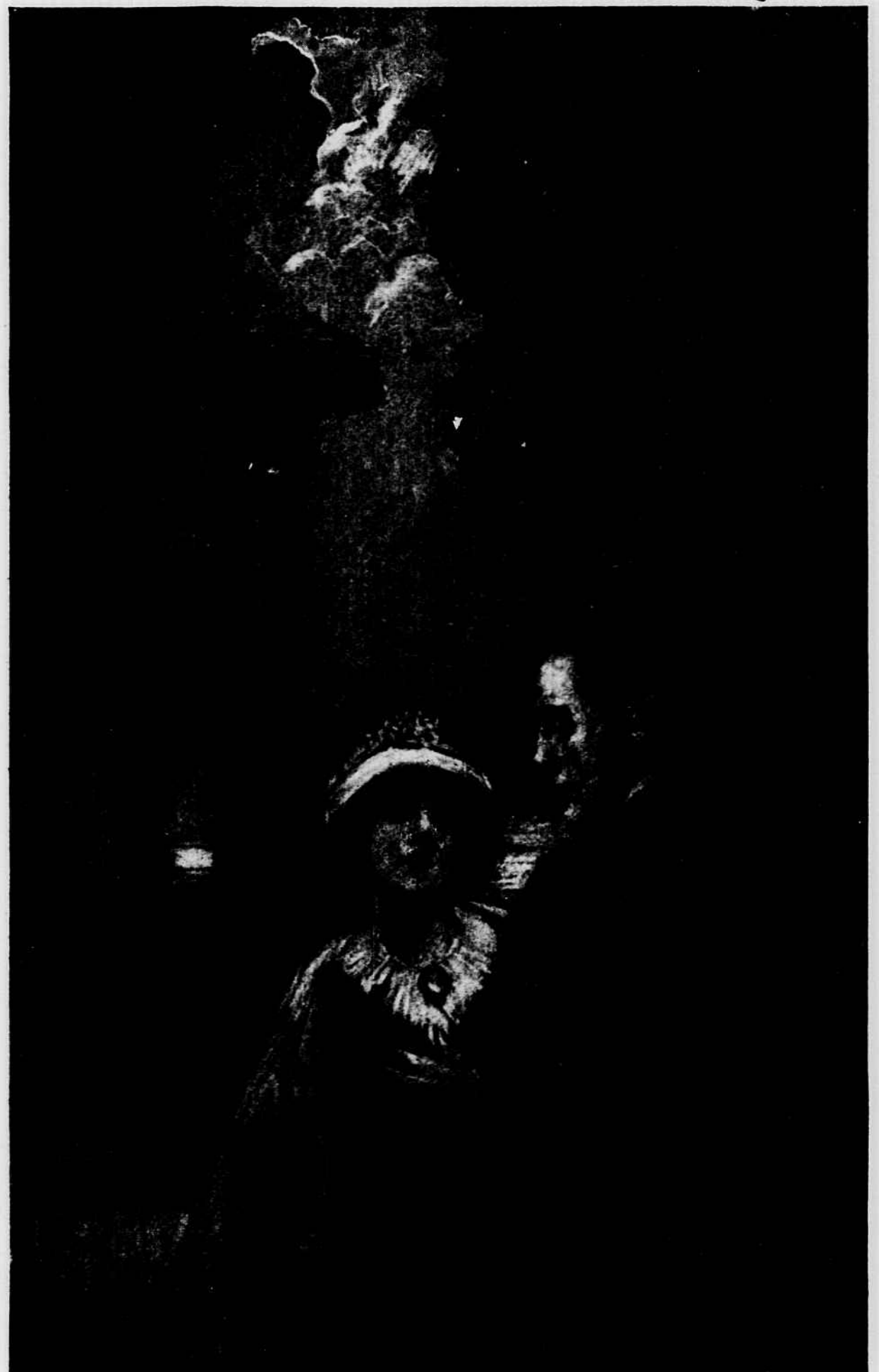
"By the two-twenty P. M. tomorrow."

"Meet me here at ten, and we'll go into matters fully. I shall not intrust this affair to other hands than my own while you are absent."

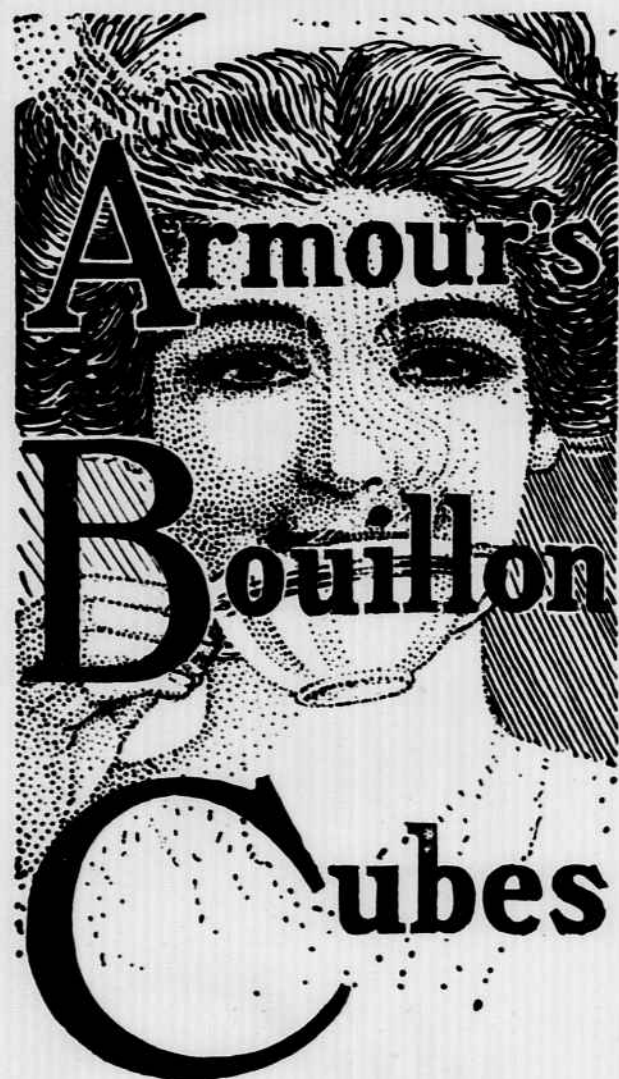
Clancy laughed, and took a crushed cigar from his waistcoat pocket. "That's the most sensible thing you've said during the last hour," he cried. "Now walk with me over to Broadway and I'll buy you a drink."

OFFICIALLY there was no excuse for sending Clancy to Palm Beach. The leave of absence gave Clancy liberty; for a detective on vacation is free to do as he likes with his time. As to the expense, that was provided for by what Steingall mentally called the Delamar Fund, of which there was no record whatever. Still, it was in the mind of each man that a costly journey to and from Florida was hardly warranted by existing conditions, so far as the inquest of Kyrle went.

Steingall's mental attitude was that of a man shut up in a room of utter darkness, and groping blindly for some mysterious presence that might or might not be there. He expected to find something; but his hands touched only empty air. If Clancy, if anything, was not keener than himself in this strange quest, he would



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have been inclined to turn over the whole business to the New Jersey police. Even the sensational bequest of the diary did not justify a call on the time and energies of the bureau, since it really formed part and parcel of the local investigation.

But he trusted Clancy as he would trust no other. He knew it was useless to ask his diminutive colleague what he expected to discover in Florida,—as well ask an opium eater to describe his dreams,—so it was with whimsical gravity that he said next morning:

"Unless you strike oil soon, old man, chuck the whole business, send me a wire, and come home. I'll tell Atlantic City we haven't any further interest in the case."

"But the Atlantic City people will promptly arrest Mrs. Delamar on suspicion."

"Let them."

"Oh, dear no! Whatever happens, she must remain in a fool's paradise till the adjourned inquest."

"Did you see her yesterday?"

"Yes. She went shopping."

Steingall laughed with sheer annoyance. "I'm afraid we've found a mare's nest, Charles," he said.

"Or an owl's. Don't forget our owl. I wish you had heard that screech. It would have curdled your backbone, and then stiffened it. I believe Kyrle was shrieking for vengeance through that bird's steam-whistle throat."

"Owl me no owls!" cried Steingall. "I'm beginning to fear we are a pair of geese."

And with this they parted, Clancy to rush south during the night, and Steingall to clear up arrears of other pressing business.

NEXT morning Claude Waverton traveled to the Adirondacks, and for four days lived like a hermit, or as nearly resembling a hermit as the conditions of existence in a well kept country house would permit. On the score of ill health he politely declined to receive the manager, the butler, the head gardener, or anyone who meant to discuss household affairs or business in any shape or form. He hardly realized the immense concession made by the Rev. George W. Norton, local pastor of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in calling on an admitted rascal who happened to be his chief parishioner, or he might have endeavored to assuage the worthy clergyman's distress by promising future amendment and heavy subscriptions to various deserving objects. But he shut himself off resolutely, even from the servants in the house, and if he encountered an employee in his solitary wanderings through the park he would avoid the man altogether, or, if that was impossible, acknowledge the salute and cheery "Good day, Sir," by a smile and nod and a quickened pace.

Within doors he lived mainly in the library, and his constant companion, whether inside the house or strolling about the domain, was an old hound that had hobbled into view when he chanced to pass the stables on the afternoon of his arrival.

"Hello, Bob!" he had cried joyously, and the dog ceased growling and leaped up at him. In fact, Bob's hoarse yelps of delight brought out an appreciative groom, who was manifestly surprised when the two went off together.

"Queer thing!" said the man to Rice later. "Old Bob isn't a forgivin' sort of beast, an' I thought he'd remember the boss pepperin' him with shot the last time he was here."

"What was that for?" demanded Rice, who was beginning to think that the Claude Waverton of former days was an evil dream, a figment of a distorted imagination.

"Well, you see, Bob was a bit spoiled by one of the keepers who took 'im out, an' he flushed a flight of duck the first day he was tried. The second time Mr. Claude let drive at 'im, an' he's been lame ever since."

Oddly enough, Waverton discovered the shot marks in Bob's hind leg next day, and asked Rice if he could say what caused them.

For once the valet was at a loss to frame an answer. "I don't rightly know the facts, Sir," he stammered. "The dog was shot, I believe."

"I can see that for myself. Was it an accident?"

"Something of the kind, Sir."

"Some clumsy brute blundered, I suppose. Find out from the head keeper—what's his name?"

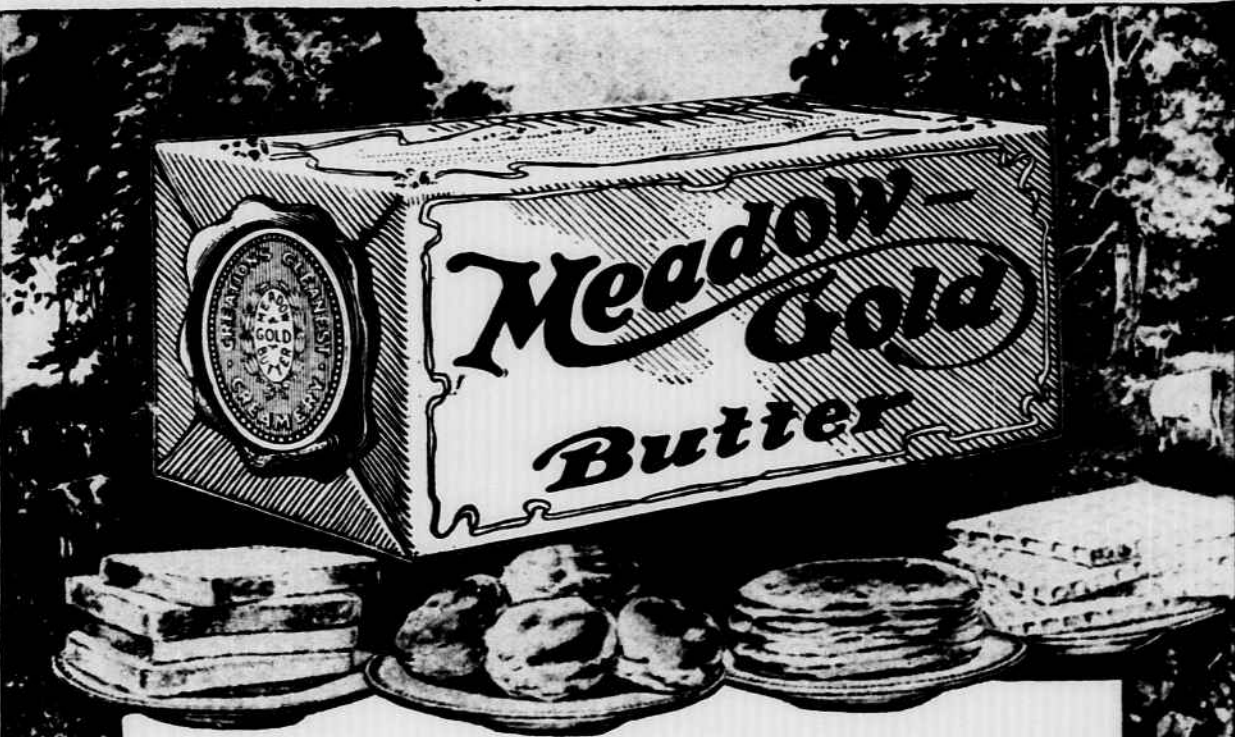
"Binks, Sir."

"Ah, yes. Ask Binks how it happened."

Rice hoped that the thing would be forgotten; but Waverton questioned him again next morning, and Rice was compelled to blurt out the distressing information that Bob had been the victim of his master's annoyance.

Waverton did not look confused, nor try to laugh the incident away. His face took on that curiously stern look which was one of his new and rare characteristics.

"Why didn't some man drop his gun and



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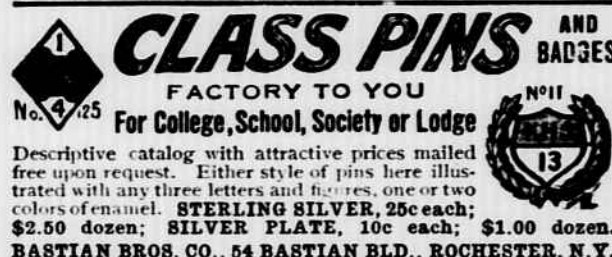
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give me a licking?" he said quietly. "I was a fine specimen of a tough in those days, Rice, and the other fellows in the line could not have been much better."

Rice, having nothing to say, remained silent, and Bob was consoled for past injuries by half of a juicy kidney.

WHEN in New York, Waverton had purchased a typewriter. His right wrist was still so stiff and intractable that he was unable to use a pen, and, as he explained to Rice, and to Curtis the lawyer in a letter, it was easier to spell out his correspondence on the machine with his left hand than to draw it laboriously with the same untutored member. The cuts on his right hand and arm were healed, and the bruises had vanished; but he was acutely conscious at times of some damaged nerve or ligament at the junction of hand and wrist. Nothing could be done surgically, the doctors at Palm Beach had assured him. Time alone could cure, and Time is a surgeon not to be hurried.

He soon gained surprising efficiency in his one-handed manipulation of the typewriter, and on Friday, the fourth day of residence at The Dene, he spent an hour after breakfast in writing a letter. In the first instance he made a rough draft, which he corrected, copied, and burned. Then he addressed an envelop, and summoned Rice.

"Don't mail this in the letterbox," he said; "but take it yourself to the postoffice."

The valet understood that the missive was not meant to be scrutinized by other eyes, and hurried away on the errand, the township of Saginaw being nearly a mile distant. Being quite a human person, he glanced at the address, and was positively startled on finding that it was intended for "Mrs. Elstead," at Narragansett Pier. Now, Rice was well aware that Mrs. Waverton had reverted to her maiden name, and his sedate face creased in an appreciative grin.

"Good luck to you!" he murmured, as the letter disappeared in a window slit of the Saginaw postoffice. "If it wasn't for Miss Kathleen, there mightn't be much hope; but now I'll lay a five-spot to a hayseed that that blessed kid will bring 'em together again."

Rice, it may be observed, liked taking long odds; so he lost a remarkable number of bets.

ON Sunday and Monday he cast an ob-servant eye over his master's mail; but no envelop bore the Narragansett postmark. Indeed, Waverton's correspondence was growing smaller every day. Rice himself, at first, used to send a stereotyped acknowledgment of nearly all letters, in which "Mr. Claude Waverton regrets that his recent accident prevents him from answering yours of the —th," and this style of rejoinder exercised a marked effect in lessening the volume of condolences and anxious inquiries that poured in from clubs, theaters, hotels, and sporting centers like Chicago and Saratoga.

Rice, of course, had seen Mrs. Waverton's handwriting quite recently, and he fancied he would recognize it. He was not mistaken, though,—to use his own expressive phrase, it fair gev' him a turn, it did,—when the expected letter arrived on Monday evening, by hand, and addressed to himself.

DEAR MR. RICE (it ran).—I am here, in Saginaw, at the Rev. Mr. Norton's house. Can you come and see me for a few minutes, and as soon as possible? I believe that no one in the place, other than Mr. and Mrs. Norton, knows of my presence, and I wish the fact to be kept quite private at present.

Sincerely, DORIS WAVERTON.

"Who brought this?" he gasped, gazing wide-eyed at the footman who handed him the note.

"One of Mrs. Norton's gals—an' a pretty one too," came the answer with a wink.

That wink was helpful. It restored Rice to a semblance of self-possession.

"Oh, if she's a pretty one, I must attend to her without delay," he smirked, and the footman announced in the servants' hall that old Rice wasn't quite such a dyed-in-the-wool bachelor as he made himself out to be.

On his way to the door the valet determined that, come what might, he would see his former mistress, and he told the waiting messenger that he would be at the parsonage a few minutes after eight o'clock.

HE rushed through his duties when Waverton had dressed for dinner, and, by a rapid scurry on a bicycle, was at Norton's house at the appointed time. He was shown into the study, and there found Doris Waverton, who was attired in a traveling costume, and wore a large hat draped with a dark blue motoring veil. This, however, was lifted at the moment, and her charming face was flushed with excitement and anxiety.

"I sent for you, Rice," she explained instantly, "because I did not care to trust my affairs to any other person at The Dene, and

signed my former name to prevent any chance of error. I want to see my—to see Mr. Waverton tonight if possible. How can I manage it?"

Rice was wrung with conflicting emotions. He was puzzled, pleased, flattered, at the same moment; but he could only blurt out a commonplace opinion that if she would authorize him to ask Mr. Claude—

"Oh, I don't mean in that way," she interrupted eagerly. "I am afraid, after my Rhode Island experiences, and from circumstances that have come to my knowledge since, that if Mr. Waverton knew I was in Saginaw he would take every means in his power to avoid me. But I must see him, speak to him—I really must! Don't you understand, Rice? I want to take him by surprise, to come upon him so unexpectedly that he cannot refuse to discuss certain matters with me. You will help me, won't you? I am quite alone here, and I have no one else to appeal to. Can you manage this thing for me, somehow?"

Very beautiful and pathetic she looked in her pleading, and the valet, who might have been a knight errant had he lived a few hundred years earlier, vowed that he would be her slave if it cost him his job; which meant far more to him than the fret and fume of life to a light-headed troubadour.

His right hand rose to the shaved upper lip, and his left traveled to the small of his back.

"Well, Ma'am, seein' as it's you, I'll do what I can—"

"Ah, I was sure of you, Rice!" broke in Doris, with a catch in her voice that went to the man's heart.

"You see, it's this way, Ma'am," he went on. "Bein' a fine night, an' not givin' much time to his dinner, Mr. Claude will probably light a cigar and go out for a stroll with Bob—"

"Bob!" she exclaimed. "Who is Bob?"

"The old setter, Ma'am, the lame dog."

"Oh, I remember. He was my particular friend. But—" She hesitated in a bewildered way until the urgency of her mission drove aside all other considerations. "You mean that I may meet Mr. Waverton in the park?"

"It's almost a certainty, Ma'am. If you was to go now to the boathouse by the lake he will probably pass that way before nine o'clock."

"But if he does not? Tonight, just because I happen to be awaiting him, he may remain in the house."

Rice coughed, sure sign of a diplomatic utterance. "In that case, Ma'am, if Mr. Claude stops indoors, he will be in the library, an' the drawing room windows will be open. I'll take care that they are."

"Ah!" Doris sighed her gratitude, and opened the gold purse that hung from her neck by a chain.

"If you don't mind, Ma'am, I'd rather—" began the valet sheepishly.

She closed the purse with a snap, and smiled brightly. "I quite understand, Rice," she said. "You are acting as my true well-wisher, not as one whom I could pay for services rendered."

Rice's pallid face flushed with pleasure. "I can only hope, Ma'am—" he blurted forth, but, recollecting himself, checked the expression of a pious desire, and went on to ask if she needed any assistance in reaching the boathouse, since she would probably wish to avoid the main road.

She laughed at that. "I have not forgotten my way about the place," she said. "By walking a quarter of a mile down the sycamore avenue I can enter the park by climbing a gate, and then take the path through the wood to the lake. It is not dark, and the distance is short; so there is nothing to be afraid of, and a scampering rabbit or two will not alarm me."

SO the valet raced back to the house, and, watching developments from an upper window, heard Waverton whistle to the dog, and saw the pair descend an Italian terrace and stride off across the sloping pasture land that led in a gentle descent to the broad expanse of Lake Champlain.

Rice looked at his watch,—ten minutes to nine. "It's as good as a play," he chuckled. "Now, I wonder if it will work out all right? What a facer it 'ud be for Mrs. Delamar if Mr. Claude an' his lawful wife kem together again!"

Meanwhile, Doris had gone to her self-appointed tryst. The avenue she had spoken of was a public road lined with sycamore trees, and halfway along its straight and level arcade a gate gave access to a densely planted wood which provided cover for some of the pheasants Waverton had imported. The gate was locked; but this active young woman made light of that, and a "drive," or shooting road, that led to the lake was really less gloomy than the arched-in avenue.

The drive stopped somewhat short of a



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belt of willows and osiers, but a path to the left would bring her to the boathouse, while the same path to the right crossed another shooting alley some two hundred yards farther on.

In the gloaming of that midsummer night Doris Waverton could see the water shining like a sheet of burnished silver above the fringe of willows. She stepped out smartly, and gave no heed to the bolting of white-tailed rabbits or the rustling of birds. Much to her relief, she saw no one during that traverse of the wood. But it did not follow that because she did not see she was therefore unseen.

As she turned into the narrow path bordering the lake a man rose from the wood's undergrowth, amid which he had crouched when her dainty figure appeared in the alley.

"Unless I'm losin' me eyesight, that's Mrs. Waverton," soliloquized the apparition, who had "hobo" writ large on face and garments. "I couldn't see her pretty phiz, bless her little heart; but I'd swear to her walk an' style among a thousand. Now, what's she after? What's she doin' here? The papers said—but curse the papers: they mostly tell lies! Joe, me boy, you believe your own eyes, an' p'raps, if you're lucky, your ears."

And with that he followed his quarry, stalking her with a wary skill born of the woodland and the wild.

CHAPTER IX. Husband and Wife

DORIS WAVERTON halted at the edge of the wood, and gazed wistfully across the smooth plateau of the park at the Old World front of the house that Claude Waverton's father had built with treasure extracted from the mountains of Colorado.

Lights were shining dimly in some of the windows; but the house stood out boldly from its background of tall trees, and the girl-wife's eyes filled with tears as she looked at the mansion that had witnessed her homecoming as a happy bride, in which her child was born, and where her dream of wedded bliss had been converted into a long agony of utter wretchedness.

All during that pause, in the peace and solitude of the stately park, a doubt, a misgiving, which had peeped up in her secret soul at a certain momentous interview in the lawyer's office, and had troubled her actively since a letter from her husband came to hand a few hours ago, grew into a sort of unnerving obsession.

Could the man who had written that letter have been so utterly vile and contemptible as her imagination had painted him? Had she striven, honestly and with single-mindedness, to reclaim him when they began to drift apart? Had she not been too ready to shrink from him with loathing when he lurched into her presence and outraged her delicacy with coarse jibes and crudely hateful innuendos?

Poor girl! In the days of expanding maidenhood she had regarded marriage as the crown and desire of life, and it had proved to be little more than a sordid bondage, a slavery of convention hard and cruel as the yoke of servitude in some Arab-ridden village of mid-Africa. Nevertheless, the influence of early training was stubborn. It had not been wholly obliterated even by her tears, and the sprig of hope and faith that took root in her heart when she learned that her scamp of a husband had saved little Kathleen's life grew into a vigorous plant with the reading of the letter sent to her at Narragansett Pier.

Studiously moderate and impersonal in tone, it had warned her against the insidious arts of John Stratton Tearle. It pretended to be dictated only by regard for her future well being; but what woman would fail to discover in every line a passionate longing and regret inspired by herself? Certainly it was cold, almost austere, in tone. But there, again, her woman's heart argued that pride restrained her husband from revealing his true intent. For that was the saddest feature of all her suffering. Despite the solemn pronouncement of the law, she still regarded Claude Waverton as her husband, and Tearle had blundered badly in thinking that her tortured soul would seek consolation in a second matrimonial venture, save under the last and worst indignity of a marriage between Waverton and Mrs. Delamar.

The letter, it was true, forbade her emphatically either to write or to endeavor to seek an interview with "one who has gone out of your life forever"; but, beneath a somewhat frigid manner, poor Doris was essentially feminine and impulsive,—a glowing little volcano of love and passion coated with the ice of reserve, and shrouded, perhaps, under a thin veil of Puritanism.

And finally there was Kathleen, that engaging mite who would soon be asking why, if other girls had fathers, she had none!

So, after a dispute with Mrs. Daunt that approached perilously near a rupture be-

tween two devoted sisters, Doris had taken her courage in both hands and hied her to Lake Champlain. And now here she was, a trespasser on her husband's estate, a woman eagerly scanning the distant house and grounds for the appearance of the man she wished to drag out of the pit he had dugged for himself!

She fancied she saw a figure emerging from one of the drawing room windows, which were of the French type and opened straight out on a grass lawn. Breathing a prayer for guidance in her task, she ran the few intervening yards to the boathouse, and hid in its deep veranda; for, on the park side, the building served as a summerhouse and dressing shed for polo players or baseball teams.

She was so intent on attaining her object—to remain unseen till Waverton was so near that he could not avoid her without literally running away—that she had no knowledge of the sinister form that crept out of the wood close to the water's edge, and crawled on hands and knees among the tall reeds and dwarf willows until it was lying at full length close to the side rail of the veranda.

Joe Brett, idler and village scapegrace, realized that Mrs. Waverton was waiting for someone. If so, it might be to his advantage if he could discover the object of this clandestine meeting; for by such means a poor man might put himself in the way of earning a dollar or two without undue exertion. Fearful of being seen against the luminous background of the lake, he nestled close to the foundation wall, and thus could not be-

come aware, till retreat was impossible, that the other party to the rendezvous was accompanied by a dog, a dog that might be old and lame, but whose nose was as keen as ever.

WAVERTON reached the path nearly two hundred yards from the boathouse, and the slow, firm tread of his approaching footsteps could be heard thenceforth in that silent air. He was smoking, and Bob walked soberly by his side, disdaining the flurry of frightened water fowl or the quick plunge of a rat diving for safety. The two were abreast of the boathouse, when Doris emerged from its shadows. Instantly the dog barked, and his fur bristled on neck and spine; but his quick intelligence told him that this was no stranger. When he discovered his mistress's identity, he whined with delight, and capered stiffly up the few steps of the house to fawn on her.

She quieted Bob with an affectionate hand; but her eyes were fixed on her husband, who stood in the path as though rooted to it.

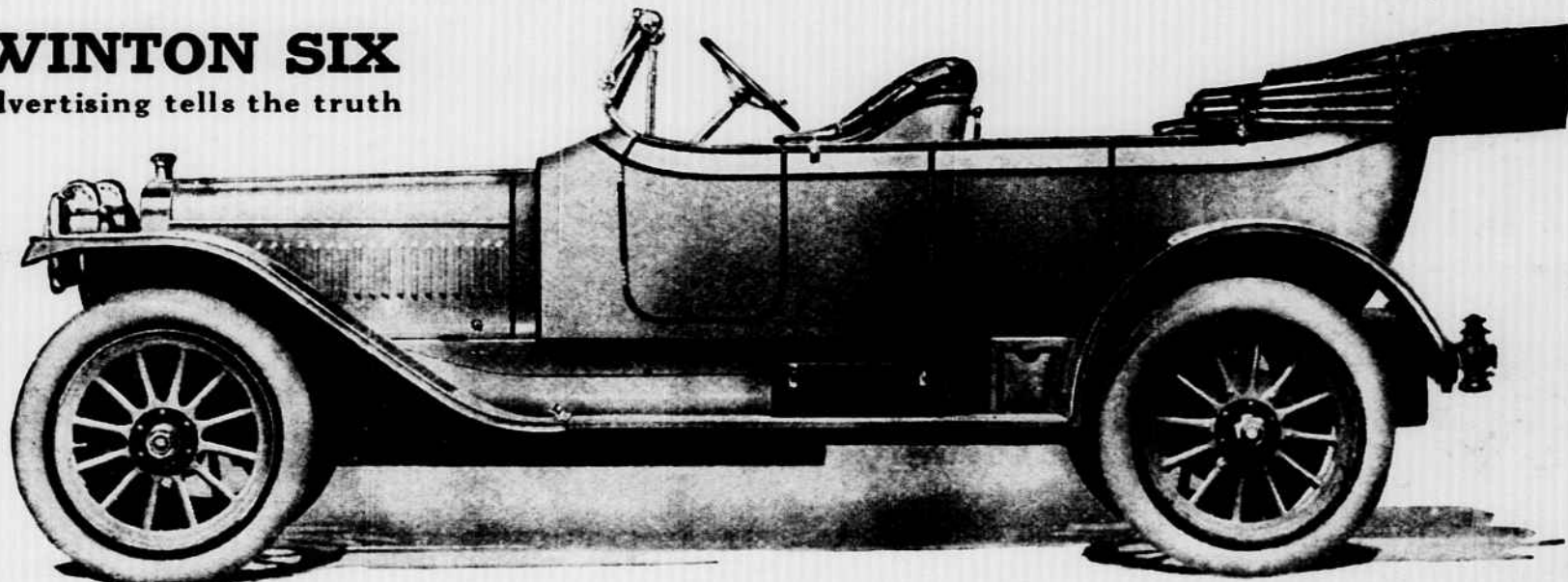
"Claude!" she said, and her voice was tremulous with excitement. "Claude, you must forgive me; but—"

Then she stopped, overwhelmed and distraught; for her husband, whose amazement and distress she interpreted as alarm, gasped brokenly, "You! Mrs. Waverton! Why are you here?"

She stepped out into the open, and they stood face to face, while the dog frisked between them. They were near enough to see each other plainly in the dusk; though the

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waning light enabled neither to distinguish features and expression with that intimate acquaintance which a husband and wife must possess.

She trembled in every limb, for the cold aloofness of those words, "Mrs. Waverton," argued ill for her achievement; but she forced herself to speak.

"Claude," she said again, and her voice was strangely sweet and low, "I have ventured to disobey your wishes because I felt that if you and I could open our hearts freely we might reach an understanding not to be attained by the written word. Forgive me, Claude! I am acting for the best, and, if you will only listen to what I have to say, I promise to obey your final decision, even though you bid me go away, and never try to see or speak to you again."

Waverton raised a hand to his eyes in a gesture of pain that was new to his wife's devouring gaze. "Oh, you should not have done this thing!" he muttered, and his face looked white and drawn; though during these later days he had, in the opinion of Rice and others, seemed to be recovering his strength rapidly.

"I could not help it, Claude," she pleaded. "Some secret impulse more powerful than myself urged me to take the long journey from the coast, and not waste a moment before I sought you out."

She drew a little nearer, and, gaining confidence, looked up at him. How thin and worn he was! How his illness had aged him! What a different man from the bloated, red-faced creature from whom she had fled more than a year ago! Yet suffering had restored that air of distinction, of refinement, which her girlish fancy had found in the bridegroom, only to lose all sense of its existence in the man who had wrung her very heart-strings by his maltreatment.

"Your letter forbade an answer, I know," she went on with growing earnestness; but ever since you saved our dear Kathleen's life I could not bring myself to believe that we were parted forever. Claude, won't you say something? Must I be forced to believe that you really wish to thrust me out of your life forever? Indeed, indeed, I am not here to reproach you! Rather would I vow to you and with you, on our knees if we mingled our pledges with prayers, that the horrid past shall be forgotten, that we shall strive to help each other in that forgetting, that, in sharing the love of our child, we shall strive to blot out memories of all the wrong and misery that have gone before. Oh, Claude, do listen to me! Don't turn away as if your heart was still hardened against me. If my words offend, then give no ear to their unadvised form, but try to realize that they are welling up from the depths of a woman's nature, a woman who is still your wife, and who must ever remain the mother of your child."

"Please, please, Mrs. Waverton—Doris—do calm yourself!" he broke in, and his utterance was husky, as if he was fighting against some overpowering emotion. "I would have made any sacrifice rather than have this happen! You are distressing yourself unduly. I am quite unworthy of such chivalry on your part. You must remember what divided us! I was wholly to blame, and you would be mad to trust yourself again to a man who behaved so despicably, so outrageously. I am sober now; but I shall go back to the swine trough,—it is in my blood,—and then indeed you would have cause to bewail your lot! Yet, as I say, I am perforce in possession of my senses for the hour; so let me apologize for my conduct, and let my regret be the measure of my sincerity in urging you to leave me now and for all time."

THOUGH his wife was strung to a pitch of agitation that was almost unbearable, she caught some new cadence in his voice, some note of deep reverence and unavailing sorrow, that made divinest music in her ears. Never before, even in the blithe days of wooing, had Claude spoken in that way. How he had changed! His manner with women, even at its best, was apt to be truculently jocular; yet now he was addressing her as though she were some fair goddess whom he had transgressed against beyond hope of mercy. What had caused this miracle? Had a soul sprung into being in one who had seemed to be coarsest clay? Her mother's heart went out to him. She longed to take him in her arms, and kiss away the needless fear that for him there was no forgiveness.

But she restrained herself, and was content to put a timid hand on his arm.

"We have at least taken a decisive step when we are ready to discuss our trouble," she said. "Dear, will you walk with me a little way? There is a seat yonder, near the statue of Antinous, where we might sit awhile, and talk over the wreck we have made of our lives. I am not hysterical, as you well know. I was naturally excited at

first; for I could not guess how you would receive me. But now I shall be calm. You need not dread the tears which you hate—as every man does, I suppose. But, candidly, I should like to be seated. I am somewhat tired. It has been a wearing day,—for my nerves, at any rate,—and I am sure you will not drive me away now until I have told you what is in my mind. Come! Let me tell you first how deeply moved I was by the solicitude that breathed through every sentence in your letter. It was your right arm that was injured, was it not? So I can take this arm while we walk, and then I shall be able to speak with more confidence, since you cannot escape, as you did at Narragansett Pier, while I am holding you."

Doris was so sure of her ground now that she actually laughed, with the low, hushed coo of a woman who has won back an errant husband from the slough of sin and despair. But she felt that he was trembling, and her eager thought read in this sign of physical weakness his doubt whether she could really mean what she was saying.

"Don't be so tongue-tied, Dear," she murmured. "I have not come all this long way to annoy and perplex you."

"I was thinking that perhaps you would prefer to go to the house," he said hoarsely. "You must be quite exhausted. If you—had something to eat, and went to your room—we could meet in the morning—and discuss matters—"

She laughed again, little imagining how he was searching his brain for some plausible pretext to dispose of her for the night until he could plan and contrive a way out of the maze in which he was entangled.

"You forget that, although we may still remain husband and wife," even in his dismay he knew that she was blushing, and when he stole a look at her eyes they were shining like twin stars, "we have been parted by the law. No, I didn't mean that to hurt," for a tremor shook him: he was like a nervous horse that flinches under the gentlest touch, "but I shall not stay at the house until—until some later day—soon. Mr. and Mrs. Norton have kindly provided me with a room. In half an hour, or less, I shall bid you goodnight. Perhaps you and Bob will escort me through the wood. I came that way to avoid notice; but it is darker now, and if a rabbit popped up under my feet I might scream—"

A MENACING growl from the dog interfered with her rather breathless explanation. Another growl, louder and fiercer, caused them to turn and seek its cause. Then a man sprang upright near the corner of the boathouse, and they heard his startled cry:

"Call off your dog, Mr. Waverton! Call him off quick! I'll—"

Then Doris did scream, in no mock terror, and Waverton ran back hurriedly, leaving her standing alone on the path, with a whispered injunction not to move.

"Heel, Bob!" he said sternly. "Heel, I say! Now you, you rascal, come out and tell me why you were hiding there!"

Joe Brett, by no means abashed, since it fell in with his desire that he should be discovered, approached warily; for Bob had obeyed orders, but was still ready to engage in mortal combat on the slightest provocation.

"Beg pardon, Mister," he smirked, "but I kind o' happened to be alongside the wall there, by accident, as you might say, an' hearin' Mrs. W. an' you talkin' confidential, I thought it best to lie close, an' not interfere."

"You lying hound, you followed Mrs. Waverton in the first instance! What was your object? Did you mean to rob her? But you shall explain that to the Sheriff. Walk straight to the house in front of me."

"Sheriff! Walk to the house! Not me! I couldn't help listenin'! What else have I done, I'd like to know?"

"You will be told that later. Unless you come quietly I shall tie you to a post, and send my servants to drag you by the scruff of the neck."

Brett edged nearer confidentially, and leered at Waverton.

"Now look here, Boss," he said, "you just listen to reason, will you? At the worst I'm on'y trespassin', and that doesn't cut any ice here. But if you go jawin' about Sheriff's an' such like, and me tellin' every word Mrs. Waverton—"

In a cooler moment Waverton would have acted differently; but he was afire with a turbulent emotion that neither his wife nor this lurking ruffian had any inkling of. So, without further ado, he struck Joe Brett hard and true between the eyes, a straight right-arm blow that stretched the eavesdropper like a log on the path. Instantly he regretted his action, and turned to reassure the frightened woman.

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prowling creatures of this type," he began. Then he leaped forward to catch Doris before she fell; but he was too late, for she swayed and collapsed in a dead faint on a small bank of turf that ran by the path on the park side.

Bob was anxious to gnaw his prostrate enemy; so Waverton, holding his wife's limp form in his arms, was compelled to shout an imperative command to the dog to leave the man alone. It was a distinctly awkward situation, for Bob's fighting blood was aroused; yet Waverton was strangely reluctant to lay his helpless burden on the grass so that he might hold the animal until the spy could scramble to his feet and slink off. He solved the difficulty by lifting Doris bodily off the ground and striding away in the direction of the house, meanwhile calling loudly to the dog to follow.

WHEN the astounded ruffian ventured to lift his head, Waverton had already carried his wife a considerable distance, and the setter had gone with him. Then Joe Brett tenderly felt the bridge of his nose, and produced a soiled handkerchief to mop the dark fluid pouring from that damaged organ. He knew too that when morning dawned he would find himself decorated with a pair of spectacles of Nature's own contriving. But the man's low organism was governed by an innate love of sport, and he was actually more concerned with the style and force of the blow he had received than with its effects.

"Injured right arm, has he, the paralyzin' dude?" he muttered, scrambling to his feet. "Well, may I go plumb to blazes, if he can hand out that sort of a punch with the right, what in thunder would have happened if he'd dealt me one with the left?"

He went to the lake and dabbed water on his face; then, hearing voices, he dived into the wood and vanished. But his warped mind recurred many times to the pugilistic science that lay behind that half-arm blow, and he even waxed enthusiastic over it next day when Rice was sent to the village with a ten-dollar bill as a solace for the unknown man "who had accidentally sustained two black eyes on the Waverton place the previous night."

Rice argued that Brett had been mistaken: Mr. Claude must have used his left hand.

Whereat the rascal laughed scornfully. "D'ye think I don't know how he hit me?" he said. "That's a jim dandy of a tale, that is! I can take chances meself when the other feller doesn't prance into the argyment like an injia rubber mule; but take my tip, Mister, if Mr. Claude G. Waverton ever sets about you, dodge his left, or he'll knock you bughouse, he will, straight!"

The valet was puzzled. Waverton's only acquaintance with the noble art during recent years had been confined to a fairly regular attendance at those New York and Brooklyn entertainments in which prize fighters hammer each other cheerfully with eight-ounce gloves. But watching these events is not boxing. It was manifestly impossible for a man whose right hand could neither hold a pen nor press the keys of a typewriter to blacken the eyes and bruise the nose of a hard-featured rascal like Brett with that same member.

Still, he did not give much heed to the matter. His thoughts were engrossed by more important developments. He had

seen Waverton crossing the park, and was wondering what measure of success had attended Mrs. Waverton's ruse to waylay her husband, when he heard the dog's uproar, and he fancied he could distinguish his master's voice raised in anger. Hardly knowing why he ventured to interfere, he hurried out of the house and across the garden. Then he distinguished something unusual in the aspect of an approaching figure; but before he could make out what was happening Doris had recovered her senses and was on her feet again.

To be continued next Sunday

HOW THE GLORY BE CAME BACK

Continued from page 10

to the reception room, and gives him the whole tale from start to finish.

He shied some at Mr. Pepper's name first off; but when I'd supplied all the details about how he'd given up the mine as a bad job, and how it was me first discovers the platinum item, Mr. Robert begun to get interested. He read the report all through, and held the specimens under a glass, and fin'ly I was sent out to tow in Belmont Pepper.

ALL that seemed like it happened ages ago, though. Must have been a week, anyway; for it took two days before Mr. Robert could get a private report of his own, and the third day we spent organizin' the concern. And here I am, the big boss and actin' head of the Glory Be Platinum Company; even if I am doin' it under a guardian act, which Mr. Robert said he was proud to apply for.

But you should have seen Belmont Pepper just before he caught the Chicago Limited yesterday on his way West.

"Gee!" says I. "You don't look like you was goin' out to start a mine. You're costumed to open a pink tea."

"I know," says he; "but the fact is, Torchy, after wearing a flannel shirt for twelve months, I couldn't resist spending my first month's advance salary on a civilized outfit. You should see what I have in my trunk too. It may not be the custom for mine superintendents to appear in frock coats and patent leather shoes, but that is precisely what is going to happen in my case."

"That'll be something for the Glory Be to live up to, anyway," says I.

"And it will, Torchy," says he earnest. "I feel sure that it will. For this is chiefly your find, you know, and I'm banking on your wonderful luck, my boy. We'll make the Glory Be win out for us. It's got to, that's all!"

Well, there it stands. It'll be months, I expect, before we can tell whether we've picked a pippin, or puckerd our mouths on a quince. It may turn out only a chance pocket, or the vein may pinch on us, or a dozen other things like that; but we've got a bet down, with the ball still rollin'. Meanwhile I'm still holdin' the chair behind the brass gate and shuntin' butt-ins as skilful as ever.

"By-by, Piddie," says I, here only yesterday noon. "And while you're out there hopin' around the branches of your fam'ly tree, think of my case. Mine's just breakin' ground."

THE ELEPHANT'S AMERICAN COUSIN

By DEWEY AUSTIN COBB

IT was only after I had learned a little about the *anta*, the *grambestia*, and the *vaca del monte* that some one inadvertently disclosed the fact that this imposing array of names all applied to the animal that my school geography called just plain "tapir."

He is an odd beast, and deserves all the names that have been bestowed upon him. In my mind, the word "tapir" stood for the chunky little beast I had seen wandering about at the Zoo, like a lost fat boy looking for his folks. The freak I first saw on his native heath was a very different proposition. He looked like a mud colored baby elephant, minus the "two tails" of his big relative. He is queer, even to his toes; for he has only three on his hind feet, and four on the front ones. He measured about six feet from tip to tip, and stood three and a half feet high, and he weighed between four hundred and five hundred pounds. His nose is a sort of rudimentary trunk, flexible as a snake, and can be extended six inches; he can pick up a pin with it, or break branches from trees. Nothing is taken into his mouth until it is examined and approved by this sentinel.

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In the day time he sleeps under some bush just big enough to hide him; and, though you are sure to waken him as you go profanely crashing through the brush a quarter of a mile away, he will lie and watch you approach until you are about to step on him. Then, with a "Woof-woof!" and a shrill whistle, away he goes, never following the neat little paths that he keeps trimmed out to his watering places, but plunging through the jungle, knocking over trees as big as your wrist. And while you are picking up your hat and gun, and hunting in the fallen leaves for your spectacles, which fell off when you jumped, you hear him half a mile away, still in full career, and, let us hope, safe and happy.

People who ought to know about it say that a tapir captured in maturity cannot be tamed. But a baby tapir is the "cutest little cuss" you ever saw. He is spotted, like a fawn, with white, and is as clumsy as a real baby. Next to his mother, he loves a human guardian. If his mother is killed or cap-

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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS

CLAUDE G. WAVERTON, a rich young New Yorker, became so dissolute that his wife Doris was forced to get a divorce, which was just at the time he was seriously injured in an automobile accident at Palm Beach, Florida. He recovered at the Asphodel House, where he was attended by a woman of unsavory reputation, known as Mrs. Josephine Delamar. On his return to the North, Waverton's friends were astounded at the change in him: for he had dropped all his riotous habits and become a sober, respectable man. He saved his own child from drowning at Narragansett Pier; then spurned his wife's efforts to bring about a reconciliation and departed.

Herbert W. Kyrle of Absecon, New Jersey, Mrs. Delamar's husband, was found dead (supposedly from heart failure) in a cutter off Cape May. James Leander Steingall, inspector in charge of the New York Detective Bureau, and C. F. Clancy, his chief assistant, instantly took up the case. It was found that Kyrle had been poisoned, and Clancy busied himself in running down clues at Absecon, which seemed to implicate Mrs. Delamar.

Waverton had sent Doris a warning against John Stratton Tearle, which she interpreted as betokening a wish for a reconciliation, which she ardently desired, and so she rushed over to the old country home and met her former husband suddenly in the park.

CHAPTER IX. (Continued)

Husband and Wife



WOMAN'S first thought is given to her appearance, and Doris had scarcely realized her whereabouts before her hand traveled mechanically to hat and hair. "Oh, how utterly foolish of me to break down like that!" she almost sobbed. "But I was so frightened, and I imagined that you would be hurt in a scuffle with that dreadful man. Where is he?"

Then she looked round, and discovered that she was standing nearly halfway between house and lake.

"How did I get here?" she cried, utterly bewildered. "Did you carry me? But how was that possible, when you are so weak?"

She broke off with a fresh cry of alarm, because Rice came panting up, and Waverton grasped desperately at the opportunity that presented itself.

"Not a word before the servants, Doris," he muttered. "Leave matters as they are till the morning. I promise you they will be gone into thoroughly then. Let Rice take you to the dining room, where he will bring you a glass of wine, and by the time a carriage is ready you will be feeling all right again. You won't mind if I go straight to my room, will you? There is not so much of you that I could not have carried you a mile if I were in good form; but I was badly broken up at Palm Beach, you know—"

He ended lamely, for the explanation was curiously labored; but Doris, tearful, bubbling over with joy, yet distressed by the outcome of her momentary weakness, fell in with his suggestions willingly. Rice, keeping discreetly in the background, was delighted by the manner and speech of husband and wife as they walked together to the house. He was somewhat taken aback when he found that Mrs. Waverton was left to his care when they reached the interior; but her smiling face reassured him, and she thanked him very sweetly for all that he had done as he ushered her past an astounded footman in the hall, and saw her safely into the waiting carriage.

Next morning, about ten o'clock, he was intrusted with the mission of searching for and placating Joe Brett, and Waverton also handed him a letter.

"You will be passing the parsonage," he said. "Leave that for Mrs. Waverton. There is no answer, and I should prefer, if possible, that you should not hold any communication with her."

THE words struck chill on the valet's warm heart; but he soon hugged the belief that his master was only feeling ill and wretched as the outcome of experiences overnight. Nevertheless, his first impression was the right one; for the letter that Waverton had written to his wife conveyed the most flagrant insult that he could inflict on the woman who had surrendered all that she held best and holiest for his sake. It read:

DEAR DORIS.—I was unwilling last night to blurt out a fact that must have altered the whole tone of your words. You were so excited and unnerved that I am sure you will credit me with displaying at least some regard for your feelings when I withheld the plain statement I here make, namely, that I intend to marry Mrs. Delamar at an early date. You now know why I have persistently refused to meet you since you gave me my freedom and obtained your own. In warning you against Tearle, I was only trying to do you a good turn. Need I say more? Sincerely,

CLAUDE G. WAVERTON.

P. S.—I cannot do other than type

this note. Would you mind burning it? Let its ashes mingle with those of any projects you may have formed as the outcome of last night's useless and painful scene.

At first Doris refused to accept the evidence of her physical senses. She held in her hands and read with her eyes a document so curt and unbelievable that her benumbed brain declined to assimilate a word of it. Three times did she peruse it in vain effort to realize its full significance. Her face, deathly pale for some minutes, suddenly became suffused with color when she recalled certain passages of the conversation by the side of the lake. She grew dimly aware too of the restraint, the half hints, the desperate anxiety to be rid of her company, on her husband's part, which were now fully revealed by what he called a "plain statement" of his intentions. What a fool she had been, and how he had punished her for her folly!

There were no tears now: she was a prey to no feelings save shame and hot indignation. Burn Claude Waverton's letter? Never! Rather would she keep it as a reminder, if ever such were needed again, that she must exercise some degree of commonsense in her dealings with a man who had the nature of a boor in the guise of a gentleman.

She bade goodby to her puzzled and sympathetic friends at the parsonage, crossed the lake to Burlington, where she had lunch with a friend, and caught the next train for New York, telling herself that she had shaken the dust of Saginaw off her feet forever. Women, especially young women, are apt to use these words "never" and "forever" somewhat carelessly; but certainly in Doris Elstead's case (no more of "Mrs. Waverton" for her!) they seemed to be warranted by the circumstances.

HER unappreciative husband did not seem to be enjoying the rebuff he had given his wife. As a villain he was a failure. He neither smoked the callous cigarette nor chuckled over a woman's distress. Indeed, he sat very still in the library, looking out over the park, ignoring the mild question in Bob's upraised eyes; for the sun shone gloriously, and there would seldom be a better day for roaming the woods.

When Rice returned, he reported the placating of Joe Brett.

"And now," said his master, giving the valet a look

under which Rice squirmed, "I assume that someone in this house, probably you, knew that Mrs. Waverton would be in the park last night?"

"Yes, Sir," came the honest answer.

"I thought so. Well, I forgive that sort of thing once, because it may have been inspired by good intent; but the next time I am trapped in such fashion those responsible for it, or helping it in any way, will leave my service. Is that clear?"

"Yes, Sir."

Waverton said no more. He went to the typewriter, and rattled off a brief note to Steingall, in which he recounted the incidents of the meeting and pointed out that he could not think of interfering further in Mrs. Waverton's affairs.

This attempt has been a sad bungle [he wrote]. I thought it better to appeal temperately to her than raise a row with Tearle; but I was wrong. I have never understood women, and, as the outcome of my disinterested endeavor to save Mrs. Waverton from another scoundrel, I found myself compelled to lie to her this morning. She believes now that I mean to marry Mrs. Delamar. Still, as a man is free to exercise a feminine privilege, and change his mind, I shall be glad to hear from you if there is any real chance of Tearle's winning Mrs. Waverton's affections—on the rebound, as it were. It may be my wish, as it would certainly be my duty, to stop a crime of that magnitude.

Steingall was bending his brows over this enigmatical note, and nibbling his mustache in a vain effort to reconcile its rather contradictory sentiments, when a telegram was brought to him.

It was from Clancy, at Palm Beach, and it read:

Remarkable developments here. Keep clear of Clo-Clo. Connection established with purchase of crystals.

Then the chief inspector whistled, and he read Waverton's letter again; for he saw it in a new light.

CHAPTER X. A Turn of the Screw— and Two Turns of the Wheel.

CLANCY meant to stop the growth of confidential relations between Claude Waverton and the bureau, because he had good ground for believing that the man might yet figure in court side by side with Josephine Delamar. If that thrilling dénouement came about, Mrs. Delamar would be charged with the murder of her husband, and Waverton would be called on to disprove that he was "an accessory before the fact."

Even if his innocence of that particular crime were established, he might be indicted for another grave offense; and, in either event, he was officially undesirable as a friend. But, to understand Clancy's attitude on this point, it is necessary to follow the little man's adventures in Florida.

He called first on the Chief of the Police at Palm Beach, and persuaded that functionary to set on foot an inquiry as to whether any person had purchased a considerable quantity of crystals of nicotine from a local drugstore during the last year.

With regard to any ordinary drug of a poisonous nature, such a wide cast of the net might have defeated its own purpose; but crystals of nicotine was a rare poison. It was more than likely that the great majority of the Palm Beach druggists had never so much as heard of it, while those who did recognize it, and had dispensed it, would surely have some record or memory of the customer.

Then he set forth to interview Drs. Bentley and Mercier. Dr. Bentley was a fussy little man, a Bostonian, a wonderfully adroit surgeon; but so full of the present that he could deal only in generalities as to the past.

He remembered the Waverton accident, of course;



"Here We Have the Spot
Where the Car Was Wrecked."

but was inclined to dismiss it in a sentence. It had no points. The man had been stunned, and his cuts demanded a stitch or two; but the affair was nothing serious, a mere bagatelle. Now, he had a case the other day, when a rock fell on an Italian at work in a quarry, in which a splinter of granite had lodged itself between the paracentral lobule and the precuneus—now, that was a most beautiful—No, he had not examined the injuries of the poor fellow killed by the car. One did not trouble about those already dead. As for Waverton, he was scratched, nothing more.

Clancy was most polite, and bowed himself out with fluent apologies for wasting the time of a busy practitioner; but he came away with the poorest estimate of Dr. Bentley's paracentral lobule; he even went so far as to despise the doctor's precuneus.

BUT in Dr. Mercier he found a man of different metal,—a thin, lantern-jawed, hollow-eyed Southerner, hailing from New Orleans, like Clancy himself a half Frenchman, and one who could theorize and give chapter and verse for his beliefs.

Yes, he had conducted the post-mortem examination on the body of Scott, tutor to the family of Don Miguel Santander, formerly of Rosala, in the Argentine. The man's head had been flattened like a pancake.

"Was the paracentral lobule damaged?" Clancy could not help asking.

Dr. Mercier had bushy eyebrows, and they curved now disdainfully. "My dear Sir," he snapped, "the man's brain was in a pulp down to the corpus callosum."

Clancy looked grave. "In that event," he said, "he must have been struck when the car was traveling at terrific speed."

The doctor brightened again at that remark. "It was an amazing injury," he cried, "the sort of complete organic obliteration one would expect to find after a railway collision; but not as the result of a pedestrian being hit by an automobile. Indeed, bearing in mind the exact locality of the accident, I should have imagined that the thing was impossible, except under conditions that, to our knowledge, did not obtain."

Clancy sighed with relief, and resolved to curb his sarcastic tongue; for Mercier would say things if encouraged. "Will you explain that remark more fully, Doctor?" he said. "I am deeply interested, and I want to grasp this case in all its bearings."

Mercier hesitated, and the detective was afraid he meant to be careful in his statements. But the doctor only looked at his watch, and said determinedly, "I am due at the hospital within an hour; but they must wait a few minutes. My automobile is at the door. Let us jump in. I can demonstrate my meaning much more clearly on the spot."

Clancy almost chortled with delight; for he had found in this man a thinker, who, quite unacquainted with the peculiar features of the Waverton case generally, had discovered that there were discrepancies in that minor phase of it which had come under his notice professionally.

Fortunately, a pleasant southwesterly breeze tempered the excessive heat of Florida in July, and Clancy was able to enjoy to the utmost the drive along the coast road. This fine thoroughfare, which has not been in existence many years, follows the surf line throughout the greater part of its length. Of course, there are straight sections, where speeding would be practicable; but none save a lunatic or a joy rider would exceed a pace of twelve miles an hour with automobile or bicycle round many of the curves.

Halfway to Boynton the car crossed the railroad track, descended a slight gradient round a bend so sharp that each length of twenty yards of roadway was hidden from the next one by a bulging wall of tropical vegetation, and pulled up at the tip of a small promontory. From this point was attainable a delightful view of the coast; but Dr. Mercier was too engrossed in the inquiry in hand to call his companion's attention to the picturesque scenery.

HERE," he said, indicating a newly repaired portion of an embankment wall on the seaward side of the road, "here you have the spot where the car was wrecked. The front near wheel was crushed, and the bonnet damaged; but the remainder of the chassis was not interfered with. In fact, the vehicle was bought by a local garage, and is running today after undergoing repairs. But it overturned in a very awkward spot. You see, it was almost jammed against a telegraph pole, and, if the driver were seated behind the wheel in the ordinary way, his head might well have been crushed like an eggshell."

Clancy drew a deep breath; but he was resolved to let the doctor tell his story in his own way. "What exactly do you mean?" he demanded.

"Don't you see? The victim, who, according to my theory, should have escaped most lightly, namely, the man in the road, striving vainly to avoid a foolish motorist, had half his head taken off, while the driver of the automobile, who might really have been injured in that way, was flung clear over the wall and dropped on those rocks beneath, where his fall was broken by the guava tree. Now, I should have expected to find the pedestrian down there; but the exact reverse happened, or is supposed to have happened."

"Just so," said Clancy. "You have formed a theory, I suppose?"

"No, not a theory; but I am puzzled," and the deep set eyes burned with enthusiasm. "I saw the milk seller who first reported the accident, and the patrolman who was first on the scene, and both men said that Scott's body was lying close to the wall, while Waverton had been picked up from that rock down there," and he pointed to a boulder thirty feet below, on the very lip of a sinkhole, its stagnant water hidden by

plants. "I was more concerned at first with the injuries sustained by the living man; but, thinking about the affair later, I saw that the real problem was offered by the dead man. I fell in with the Coroner's theory, that the wayfarer had been crushed between the wall and the auto; but, happening to pass the place nearly a month afterward, I was struck by the vagaries of the accident, and made it my business to interview the earliest witness. I came again next day with a magnifying glass—and what do you think I found?"

"Marks on the telegraph pole!" cried Clancy, who was growing excited.

"Yes—tiny shreds of wool from a motoring cap."

"Which had been worn by Claude G. Waverton?"

"Precisely."

"And the other man's hat?"

"My friend, it was never picked up. Probably he was bareheaded. It was his habit to go uncovered, and always to moon about alone by night, I am told."

"But it was his head that was supposed to have been crushed?"

"The head that was crushed was undoubtedly inside that hat."

"Where was the cap found?"

"On the rocks, near Waverton. It was soaked with blood inside."

"Dr. Mercier, you are admirable!"

"Mr. Clancy, I see now why New York avails herself of your intelligence."

Instantly Clancy went off into French without being aware of the fact. "Of course you are aware, Monsieur, of the immense possibilities bound up in this 'puzzle' of yours?"

"It reaches far, *mon vieux*!"

"You have not spoken of it to any other person?"

"I tried to interest Dr. Bentley; but failed."

"Ah, that Bentley! Poof!" And Clancy snapped his fingers.

"*Parfaitement!*" Dr. Mercier glowed. "Dr. Bentley is a genius with the knife,—he can amputate a limb with one cut,—so," here came illustrative pantomime on Clancy's arm, "but his brain is mostly built up of undeveloped cells."

"The police—have they heard?"

"Not a word! You understand, the case is closed, and everybody is satisfied. I have no wish to be branded as a lunatic. In fact, Monsieur, I was about to ask—"

"Without your unquestionable permission, my lips are sealed—on my honor, Monsieur!"

The two men, who had been dancing about each other in half circles, bowed solemnly,—Steingall would have sacrificed a week's salary to have seen them,—then Dr. Mercier looked at his watch.

"Great Scott!" he cried, coming back to Florida and the English language once more, "half past three! All aboard, my friend! I must fly!"

"With your permission, Doctor, I shall remain here and consult the *genius loci*," said Clancy.

Mercier laughed, and disappeared in a swirl of dust.

THE detective sat on the wall, at the precise spot where it had been rebuilt, humped his shoulders, took a broken cigar from his waistcoat pocket and sniffed it, and allowed his eyes to wander from the telegraph pole to the guava tree, and back again.

He remained there till the sun scorched his back; then he too produced a high-powered lens, and examined the stout pole that had aroused Dr. Mercier's curiosity. Sure enough, he came upon minute particles of white wool, clustered roughly in a circle about three feet from the ground, while there seemed to be signs of a blow on the hard wood at that place.

He hailed a passing wagon, and rode into Palm Beach, where he ate a meal at a restaurant.

He saw an absconding bankrupt from Wall Street lunching with an Italian, and the faces of both men turned greenish white when they recognized him. Clancy nodded, smiled, and turned away. He had other fish to fry; but the pair could not collect their wits during the next five minutes.

When he had eaten, the detective called at police headquarters. Yes, there was news of crystals of nicotine. A Spaniard who kept a drugstore on Everglades-ave. had obtained an ounce for some mad New Yorker who said he wanted the drug for chemical research, the Chief of Police thought, but could not say positively.

"Have you the buyer's name?" demanded Clancy, and, somehow, he almost anticipated the reply.

"Yes, here it is. Claude G. Waverton, care of Mrs. Delamar, Asphodel House." Then the chief struck his forehead with an open palm, quite a hearty smack.

"Search me," he cried, "if that isn't the lunatic who nearly killed himself in an auto on the Boynton Road after winning a stack of money at Schwartz's place about three months ago! Now I remember! Has he been poisoning somebody?"

"One can hardly say yet; but the information is of the utmost value."

Conscious of a curious singing in his ears, Clancy obtained the name and address of the chemist, thanked the official, and went out into the comparatively cool night air. He wanted to be alone, to think long and deeply, to fit in the pieces of a mosaic that was already assuming a pattern at once fantastic and easily decipherable.

EARLY next morning he was at the drugstore, a well appointed establishment in an old part of the town; in fact, the last place where a gadabout like Curly Waverton would be seen shopping in Palm Beach if he had not meant to avoid the society promenaders always to be met with in the fashionable quarters.

Nevertheless, he had attempted no secrecy in buying nearly an ounce of deadly poison. He gave his name and address, assigned for a reason for acquiring such

dangerous stuff that he wished to get rid of the rats on board his yacht, and was content to wait a week till the quantity he needed was obtained from New York.

"Would you recognize Waverton again if you saw him?" demanded Clancy.

"I t'ink so," said the Spaniard, who spoke broken English under compulsion. "He was Americano; but I remembre heem ver' well."

Then Clancy telegraphed the message to Steingall that had supplied a strange addendum to Waverton's letter.

THE detective traveled straight to New York by the first train. He went to the Waldorf-Astoria, and inquired for Don Miguel Santander, that eminent Argentine having deferred his departure for Europe because a revolution had broken out in the neighborhood of Rosala.

Clancy's interview with the stockraiser took a peculiar turn,—it dealt entirely with the recent history of the dead tutor, Charles Scott, to whom Don Miguel gave an exemplary character.

"I met him at Buenos Ayres six years ago," he explained. "In fact he came to see me, a friend having told him that I wanted an American tutor for my children. Americans of education and good address who will take on that sort of employment are not plentiful in the Argentine; so I was glad to secure Señor Scott's services, especially as life was rather quiet on my estates, where I breed cattle and horses."

"Where had Scott been engaged previously?" asked Clancy.

"On a rubber plantation in Brazil, far inland, in a very wild part. He had contracted fever there, and was compelled to seek some less exposed occupation."

"Had he been there long? Did he ever speak of his past life?"

"I never questioned him, and he was a singularly reserved man in some respects. But my wife and I thought very highly of him, and my children adored him. They weep even now when his name is mentioned."

"Did you see him after the accident?"

Don Miguel shuddered. "Ah," he said, "it was pitiful, frightful!"

"But you recognized him?"

"It was hardly possible, if it had not been for his papers and his clothing."

"Pardon me, Sir, but do you return to Rosala?"

"Certainly, in November, or, since my visit to Europe is postponed, it may be in April."

"And, if Scott had lived, would he have gone with you?"

"Without doubt. He often said that when the little ones were grown up he would ask me for a post in connection with the estate."

"Would you have given him one?"

"With the greatest pleasure and confidence."

"He was quite denationalized, then? He had no wish to return to the States?"

"With us he was happy. But—"

"I have the most urgent reason for these inquiries, Sir. Suppose it were possible that a strange error had been made,—suppose Scott were living,—you and other members of your family would know him again and be glad to see him?"

The Spaniard smiled sadly. "I repeat that he lived with us as a friend for six years, and he has been dead hardly ten weeks. Believe me, Señor, I would pay a very large sum to see Señor Scott alive and in good health."

"And you would take him back with you to Rosala, put full faith in him once more?"

Don Miguel knew he was talking to a trusted emissary of the New York Detective Bureau, or he might have shown the anger he felt at this stupid question. As it was, he contented himself with an emphatic yes.

"One minute more and I have done," said Clancy.

"Have you a photograph of Scott?"

"He always refused to be photographed. He used to explain laughingly that he was a Mohammedan with regard to wine and portraits. If you drive me to it, I must tell you my secret belief. I think Señor Scott broke with his world for some youthful fault, and asked nothing better than to be left in peace in a strange land. I think—indeed, I am sure—he was an aristocrat, and for that reason he never went outside my house at Palm Beach by daylight, lest he should meet some old acquaintance."

"Thank you, Don Miguel," said Clancy gravely.

The detective sought his own out-of-the-way apartment. There he sat motionless for hours, building up, stone by stone, a new and amazing version of the Waverton case.

That afternoon he was closeted with Steingall in the latter's room at headquarters, and, after a long and earnest consultation, the two waited on the Commissioner. Here at last was a development that justified the New York Detective Bureau in taking official notice of the Waverton case, a development independent of the mysterious death of Kyrle, but which gave an excuse for investigating that death, Mrs. Delamar being the connecting link between the two. The matter was also laid before the District Attorney of New York County, who agreed that the circumstances warranted his taking up the matter, and he detailed one of his assistants, Mr. Forbes, to look after the legal side of the investigation. The authorities of Atlantic City were given such information as was considered necessary to explain the interest of New York officials in the case. Clancy was formally detailed for special duty.

THE detectives dined together at a quiet café, where the proprietor was an Italian and several members of his staff were avowed anarchists; but the cooking was excellent, and the meal was served in a quiet, up-

stairs corner room, where the two could have a certain degree of privacy.

Clancy's order for the wine caused his chief's eyebrows to lift. "My dear Charles," he said, "you must have found a wad at Palm Beach."

"I economized on meals during the double journey, and I feel like blowing myself on a big bottle tonight."

"But—"
"No protests, please. I felt that the key of this case would be found in Palm Beach, and I was not wrong. That little doctor man is a pocket marvel. If we were really an up-to-date nation, we'd hire him for life as medical expert to the bureau."

They could hear the waiter halfway up the stairs vociferating instructions about a *vin frappe*; so Steingall dropped his voice to a murmur.

"If Waverton is Scott, who is Scott?" he asked.

"We must ask him."

"Queer thing his wife didn't have any suspicion of the truth. His own letter proves that he was driven to extremities by her willingness to let bygones be bygones. Poor devil! He is an honorable man too, Charles."

"Don Miguel was clear on that point."

"The more one looks into this affair the greater tangle it presents. If Waverton is Scott, then it was not Scott, but Waverton, who bought the poison."

"We must secure the drugstore merchant for the adjourned inquest. Mrs. Delamar's face will be a picture when she learns how she has been humbugged."

"But this later edition of Waverton perforce takes the other fellow's misdeeds on his shoulders. And how can he explain away the crystals of nicotine? Will he own up?"

"If he is the man I estimate him, he will die first."

"Dash it all! we don't want to drive him to suicide."

"We won't. We must get Mrs. Waverton to help. She will bring him to his knees. Ah! Here are the *hors d'œuvres* and the wine. Felice stocks the best olives in New York. Some day he will be appreciated at his true worth, and then he will be made manager of the Ritz-Carlton or Sherry's. Meanwhile, here's to next Wednesday!" and Clancy emptied a glass of champagne.

It was a singular toast, but Steingall honored it. On the day named Clancy would be in Atlantic City, attending the adjourned inquest.

CHAPTER XI. An Official Conspiracy

WAVERTON believed now that he had shaken off the undesirable attentions of two women in whom he was no longer interested; but, despite his success in that direction, the rest cure was sadly interfered with. In the first instance, he had purchased a new motorcar; not an imported racer, in which he had been so unlucky at Palm Beach, but a car of American design and manufacture. It differed in so many details from the Italian machine that he had practically to learn its features like a novice. Nor would he drive it himself, except where the roads were free from traffic.

"I am afraid I have lost my nerve," he explained to the chauffeur, a Frenchman highly recommended by the firm that supplied the car. "I should be in difficulties if any crisis occurred, and, in any case, my right wrist is still incapable of manipulating the clutch lever and brake."

The other servants did not know that their master had specifically asked for a non-English-speaking chauffeur, preferably French, and the man himself was so unaccustomed to the mechanism of the new car that he did not regard Waverton's questions concerning it as altogether strange on the lips of an experienced motorist. Moreover, he was so pleased at securing an employer who spoke his language fluently that this consideration outweighed all others, while this same language difficulty shut him out from the severe analysis of word and deed that the servants' hall applies to the superior beings who inhabit the rest of the house.

Still, Armand could not help noticing that when "Monsieur" protested with a laugh one morning that he really must conquer his nervousness, and proceeded to drive the car out of an inclosed yard into the park, Waverton's actions were somewhat amateurish, and a turn through a gateway was made so sharply that a sheet of notepaper stuck on one of the posts would have scraped the paint off a mud guard. Things went better in the open road. Waverton amused himself by testing the various speeds, the accelerator, the oil and petrol supply, and the brakes, and seemed to enjoy the experience. After an hour's experimenting, which Armand had to check occasionally, the owner handed over control. It was his habit mostly to sit by the chauffeur's side when they went out among the hills for an extended run,

while Bob lolled luxuriously in the tonneau. He chatted more freely than ever on this occasion, remarking that he hoped soon to be able to trust himself in the midst of other vehicles once more.

Armand would have given little heed to the incident had he not chanced to see his master schooling a young horse over some hurdles early next day. For many minutes he watched in silence a display of consummate horsemanship. Then he laughed.

"Nerves? Pouf!" he said, and went off to the garage to readjust a crank that was a shade more eccentric than it was intended to be.

Another hindrance to complete forgetfulness, which Waverton seemed to confuse with lack of memory, was the way in which his discarded wife had stamped her individuality on the country house during her brief residence there. In the drawing room, which he seldom entered, the very arrangement of the furniture and general appointments were eloquent of a woman's taste and sense of beauty. When he crossed the hall, which was noted for its old oak, its trophies, and its leather jacks,—not the drinking cups known by that name, but the quilted leather coats worn by Governor John Winthrop's foot soldiers in the early part of the seventeenth century,—he could not help seeing Doris Waverton's portrait, a full-length Sargent, which smiled at him from a well lighted half-landing.

This picture was a wedding present to Doris from her father, and had been scheduled by her lawyers as part of the personal property that must be returned to her. In fact, a representative of Mowlem & Wrench was expected to put in an appearance any day with a van and a formidable list of articles to be removed, and Waverton had given instructions that, if he happened to be out, the butler was to check the list and expedite the agent's task.

When he began to take an interest in the gardens, he encountered the same feminine influence everywhere. The head gardener was surprised to find his employer recalling old vines and vanished trees, but oblivious of changes effected since his marriage. Still, the household was profoundly pleased to note the change in "Mr. Claude," the familiar name having survived the elder Waverton's death, and deep and very much mistaken were the guesses hazarded as to the cause of the appearance and sudden disappearance of his divorced wife, which could not long remain a secret in the small community of Saginaw. Waverton, of course, read the hopes of his retainers in every guarded reference to "Mrs. Waverton" evoked by his question; but the only result was that he withdrew into his shell, and, excepting Armand and a stable hand or two, seemed to avoid his own servants.

THEN, on the Saturday following Doris Waverton's abrupt departure, her husband was stung into active resentment. When he came in to breakfast after a fast canter through the woods and along the shore of the lake, he was greeted uproariously by Bob, who could not share in these excursions and vastly preferred the automobile; but the sight of an official looking document among his few letters stopped the usual romp with the dog.

It was a request that he should attend "the adjourned inquest touching the death of Herbert Widlake Kyrle," to be held at Atlantic City "at eleven o'clock A. M. the following Wednesday, as he will be asked to give evidence in certain matters deemed essential to the inquiry."

This was bad enough; but his face grew very stormy indeed when he opened another letter, and found that "Yours ever, John S. Tearle," happened to be in Albany for the week-end, and meant to run up to Saginaw and visit "dear Curly" informally.

"Bring me a railroad folder, quick!" shouted the angry recipient to a decorous footman. "And send Rice here instantly!" he added, as the man was hurrying out.

Between Rice and the railroad schedule it was soon ascertained that a telegram could hardly reach the hotel from which Tearle had written in time to prevent his departure by the early train (he had announced his intention to arrive that day); nevertheless, a curt message was sent on the off chance.

"Now, you must meet the train at the depot, Rice," said Waverton when a messenger had gone with the telegram, "and tell this fellow Tearle that he will not be admitted if he comes here."

The valet's hand rose automatically to his mouth. "Rather a difficult thing to say, Sir," he commented.

"Put it any way you like,—say that I am ill, and forbidden by the doctor to receive visitors; rig up any explanation that will send him off and keep him away for good."

"Perhaps I had better suggest, Mr. Claude, that he should travel on to Plattsburg in the

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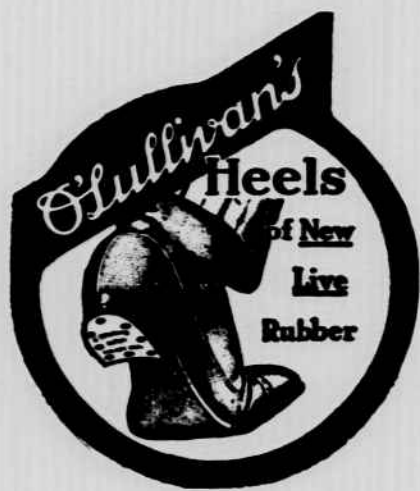
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same train, and by that means catch the southbound express."

"Capital! But be firm. Don't let him remain in Saginaw. Of course, he may disbelieve you, and insist on leaving the train; so tell Riggs the butler and the others that Mr. Tearle is not to be admitted to the house, in any event."

DRASTIC measures, these, but Rice carried them out to the letter. As he anticipated, Tearle was in the train, the telegram having arrived too late to stop his departure from Albany; so the valet prefaced a somewhat delicate mission by asking hurriedly if he had not received the message.

"No," said Tearle, at the same time signaling a porter to come and remove his portmanteau. "What was it about?"

"Mr. Claude regrets, Sir, that he cannot put you up at The Dene."

"Not put me up? What nonsense! He is alone, and the place is a regular hotel. I have heard something of his new whim; so I must come and see for myself what is the matter with him."

"You will not be admitted, Sir," said Rice respectfully, but signing to the porter that his assistance would not be needed.

Then John Stratton Tearle condescended to give a serious ear to the smooth-spoken Rice. "What the deuce are you talking about?" he demanded fiercely.

"Mr. Waverton's orders, Sir." Then Rice played his trump card, and dropped his voice to a confidential note. "I don't mind telling you, Sir, as the occasion is extra, that Mr. Claude and his wife will probably make up their little differences, and he is turnin' 'is back on hall his hold friends, just to please her."

The shot went home, as Rice meant that it should. The red-faced Tearle grew purple; but he managed to splutter, "You are talking nonsense, Man!"

"No, Sir. It's the truth. Mrs. Waverton kem 'ere 'erself last Monday, and she may be in residence any day now."

Tearle was aware of Doris's departure from Narragansett Pier early the previous Sunday, and not all his diplomacy had extracted from Mrs. Daunt any information as to her whereabouts. He himself had been summoned to New York on Wednesday by Mrs. Delamar; so Rice's statement, backed by the extraordinary instructions the valet had evidently received from Waverton, rang unpleasantly truthful.

And what was the man saying—that he had better go on to Plattsburg? He laughed savagely, and reentered the train.

"Tell your master," he said, speaking with forced composure, "tell him that I am sorry he regards me as an unwelcome guest. Tell him too that he will have cause to regret his action. Will you do that?"

"Certainly, Sir. Good morning."

There was no glint of sarcasm in Rice's eyes, nor aught save the utmost respect in his voice; but when the furious Tearle was whisked away from Saginaw the valet tipped the porter a quarter.

AS a preparation for the curiously sensational developments that now began to cluster round the adjourned inquest, Clancy made another visit to Narragansett Pier. After close and careful weighing of the facts garnered from so many directions, Steingall and he had concluded to take Doris Waverton partly into their confidence. It was a bold step, but essential to any real progress. Judges and juries do not encourage guesswork by the police; that is, when causes are actually being tried. It would be hopeless to expect any legal tribunal to deal with Waverton as an impostor if a woman of Mrs. Waverton's position and intelligence continued to regard him as her divorced husband; so Clancy was deputed to try and persuade her to obtain another interview with the suspected man, but under such conditions that any further mistake as to his identity would be impossible.

Of course, there was another witness to hand in Mrs. Delamar; but, for obvious reasons, she was not available.

She had not only seen Waverton many times after the accident, but had quarreled with him, and had met him again in New York. Did she suspect the truth already? If that were so, her quiescent attitude was explained,—she was only biding her time to use her knowledge to the best advantage. But suppose she, like every other person, imagined that the Claude Waverton of today was really the man whose folly and extravagant life had been notorious in the past, what an imbroglio that would be!

"By Jove!" said Steingall dubiously, "we must sneak like cats before we are ready to spring this business, Clancy! When you come to think of it, we might almost as well try to question the identity of a Bishop. At present we have Waverton recognized and accepted by his wife, by the other woman,

by his valet (who has been his constant attendant for some years), by a host of servants at 64th-st. and in the Adirondacks, by the family lawyer, and by his bankers. It is no child's play to start breaking down a body of evidence like that. And what have we on the other side? A theory, a bit of melodrama, well fitted for the stage, but seldom heard of in real life. We must go slow, my son, or the District Attorney will laugh at us, and refuse to adopt the notion."

"Ah, Leander, your namesake would never have swum the Hellespont if he had not possessed a stout heart!" smirked his colleague.

"Don't forget that he was drowned finally," growled Steingall, who had been goaded by constant allusion into learning the true story of the hapless priestess of Aphrodite and her lover; though, in prosaic fact, he had been christened "Leander" because his mother's brother was skipper of a Norfolk schooner bearing that name.

"Not for daring to swim, but because a silly woman forgot to light a lamp," said Clancy.

"There are two silly women in this case."

"They will nullify each other. Anyhow, James,—I call you James to spare your feelings,—you seem to forget that the first impression left on every person who has seen or spoken to this latest edition of the Tichborne claimant is one of change. 'How he has changed!' is the chorus. They all say it; yet, so crass is human nature, the moment he says himself he is not the same man, in nature, they begin to disbelieve him. His only real difficulty was in the matter of handwriting; so he coolly maintains the fiction of a permanently injured wrist, whereas his right arm is perfectly sound. I noticed the deception within a minute after I saw him at New Haven. He was so taken aback by the appearance of a bureau man that he forgot the pretense of the damaged wrist till I asked him if he had ever lived in the Tropics. That startled him. That stuck a pin deep into his thick skin, and within a minute he was handing me a cigar-box with his left hand. He caught me grinning too, and asked what was amusing me; so I had to tell him about my way of enjoying a cigar."

Steingall snorted. "Even you, the essence of New York officialdom, had a glimmering notion of the truth when you traveled with him from Narragansett Pier," went on Clancy bitingly. "For an instant you saw light; but the spark of genius was promptly doused by a bucketful of the balderdash you call commonsense."

"I'll not stay here to be insulted by a whippersnapper like you!" said Steingall, rising and locking his desk. "Run away, little boy. I'm busy. While you are jaunting to Palm Beach and mixing with the aristocracy I have to keep this great city fairly free of anarchists, because we are entertaining a real live Prince incognito this week, and the federal Government has a fit of the jumps."

"At the Plaza?" inquired Clancy.

"No. His Serene Highness is the guest of an ex-Ambassador. Now, one last word: go easy with Mrs. Waverton. She must feel hurt after her trip to her old home."

"Oh, by the way, I was nearly forgetting. Give me Waverton's letter."

"Why?"

"She must be convinced he was lying when he said he meant to marry Mrs. Delamar."

"Dash it all! It's playing the game rather low down—"

"What? To convince a loving and forgiving wife that her husband isn't so bad as he paints himself?"

Steingall produced the letter, rather unwillingly. It was not marked "Private," and he was entitled to use all lawful means to elucidate a crime; but he was a scrupulously fair man, even in dealing with notorious criminals, and he was sure that Claude Waverton had never intended his candid communication to be seen by the woman in whose interests it was written. Still, the work of the bureau came first, and he must not be deaf to the voice of a man crying from the grave that he had been foully murdered.

To be continued next Sunday

EXPLOSIVE ROCK

THE danger of explosion in mines is not entirely confined to inflammable gases, carelessly managed fuses, and neglected charges or cartridges. It has been observed that in lead mines some of the slate rocks are likely to burst on being scratched with a pick. The explosion is supposed to be due either to gases inclosed in the rocks, or to molecular strains.

Not long ago a severe explosion of slate rock occurred in a mine at Hillgrove, New South Wales, and the shock was felt for a mile or two over the surrounding country. In this instance it is believed that the rock wall where the explosion occurred was subjected to a mechanical strain.

NO OTHER WAY

Drawings by
HOWARD GILES

CHAPTER XI. (Continued)

An Official Conspiracy



SCHELDOM had Clancy's peculiar qualities been so taxed as when he found himself closeted with Doris Waverton in a sitting room at the Narragansett Pier hotel. She received him with that shy diffidence which is a characteristic of the less advanced section of American society—at any rate, in so far as the gentler sex is concerned. She began by asking if her sister might not be present at the interview; but the detective negatived the idea instantly.

"What I have to say is for your ear alone at present," he said. "I am not entitled to impose any pledge of secrecy; but I think you will agree with me that your decision in that respect would be formed on more substantial grounds after rather than before you have heard what I have to say."

"Very well," she murmured, seating herself near a window.

In the strong light that came from the sea she presented a picture of unstudied grace, and not for the first time Clancy marveled at the folly passing understanding that caused any man to cast aside such a woman for the sake of a Josephine Delamar.

"I have a surprising—indeed, I might fairly call it an amazing—statement to make, Mrs. Waverton—" he said; but she interrupted him.

"Please do not address me by that title. I am not Mrs. Waverton, but Mrs. Elstead."

Clancy leaned forward, hands on knees, and pointed chin thrust out, with a birdlike jerk of the head that, to Steingall's eyes, would have betokened the seizing of an unlooked-for opportunity. Steingall grossly described this movement as that of a hungry robin that has just detected the presence of a worm beneath the surface.

"According to the view I take, there is no reason why you should abandon your name," he said quietly.

"Surely I am the best judge of that," and the expressive face hardened under a memory of scorn and contumely.

"No one would dispute your wishes if they were based on the facts generally accepted in Mr. Waverton's recent history. But those apparent facts are now doubted by the police. That is why I am here. May I put a hypothesis? Suppose Mr. Waverton had been killed when the motor overturned at Palm Beach? You see the possibilities involved in that assumption? No divorce; you would be a widow; your daughter would inherit the estates."

"Of course, I admit all these things; but of what avail are they?"

"I think it depends largely on your own action as to whether or not they shall become actualities."

Doris gazed at him with wide-open eyes, in which there flickered some shadow of alarm. Still, Clancy could, when he chose, win a woman's confidence to a degree that almost irritated some of his professional colleagues. It was so now. She evidently found it absurd to suppose that this alert, lawyer-like, highly intelligent man should lend himself to fantastic theories devoid of basis.

"Will you kindly explain what you mean?" was her very natural exclamation.

"I hope you will not ask me for proofs, because I have not got them," he said earnestly. "I can only assure you that the Detective Bureau, which has been giving close attention to this matter since—forgive me for speaking plainly—since Mrs. Delamar's husband was found dead on a yacht off the New Jersey coast—"

"My sister, Mrs. Daunt, had the impression that that man was bound up in some way with Mrs. Delamar," came the involuntary cry.

"She was right. Mrs. Delamar is really Mrs. Kyrle, and, if you read next Thursday's newspapers, you will discover that she has been called on to explain certain highly suspicious circumstances in connection with her husband's death. Now, Mrs. Waverton,—pray excuse me; but that is your right name,—I must warn you that you will be both shocked and relieved by what I am going to tell you. We have, as I said, inquired very closely into every phase of this matter; such, for instance, as the divorce suit, which seemed to have a bearing, remote at first, on the death of this man, and it is our deliberate belief that Mr. Claude Waverton was killed that night on the road near Palm Beach. Yes, yes, you cannot be other than astounded; but my words are chosen with a full sense of their gravity. We believe, I repeat, that he was killed. We believe that the man, Charles Scott, tutor in a Spanish family from the Argentine, who was supposed to have been killed, in reality escaped with slight injuries, and took the singular and almost inconceivably daring course of changing clothes with the dead man and assuming his personality. At present, this is but a well-founded theory. If I may count on your help, I promise soon to make it a fact demonstrable before any court of law in the United States."

AT first, when he was speaking, his shrewd eyes dwelt on his hearer's face; but Doris Waverton's agitation was so marked that he thought it kinder to look

elsewhere. Even when he finished he kept his gaze averted, and did not seem to give any heed to the storm of doubt and terrified surmise that choked her utterance.

"I am sure—you mean well," she gasped; "but—what you say—is wildly impossible! I have seen my—my husband—spoken to him! I have humiliated myself—for the sake of my child! I—"

"Let me at least save you some natural distress, Mrs. Waverton, by telling you that I know all about your visit to Mr. Waverton," broke in the detective promptly. "You were influenced by the highest motives; but, when you are calmer, I shall ask you the conditions under which that meeting took place. Were you not strung to a pitch of emotion that took a good deal for granted? Did you not meet this man in the park, at an hour when you could hardly discern his features? Am I mistaken in thinking that you attributed any change you may have noted in voice or mannerism partly to his disturbed state, partly to the interval of many months since your previous meeting, and partly to the physical results of the accident?"

"He was wholly changed for the better," she almost pleaded.

"Yes; but changed—that is my point.

There must be marked resemblances between this man Scott and the late Claude Waverton,—you see, I speak very confidently,—or he could not have succeeded in deceiving a host of witnesses who were given better opportunities than you to detect the fraud. That fact chiefly accounts for my presence here to-day. If you, Claude Waverton's wife, are not to be convinced that this masquerader is not your husband our contention falls to the ground; or, at any rate, it will be a most difficult and uncertain task to try and sustain it. In a word, we are practically powerless without your help. Will you give it?"

"I—cannot!" she wailed, sobbing in sheer desperation and bewilderment. "You say you know of my visit to The Dene; but you cannot know—"

"Pardon me, Mrs. Waverton," and now Clancy thought the time had arrived to clench the argument, "I do know. Waverton, as we may continue to call him, himself wrote to the Detective Bureau, and told us the object of your journey to Lake Champlain."

DORIS was woman enough, notwithstanding the war of conflicting emotions raging in heart and brain, to dry her eyes and collect her senses on hearing a statement that in its bizarre nature transcended all that had gone before.

"He wrote, you say!" she cried hysterically.

"Yes. We cannot guess who this man really is, because the name Charles Scott is surely an alias. We cannot penetrate the motive that led him to commit a daring fraud on society. But there is one object to which he is committed with strange tenacity,—he is determined that, should you wish to marry again, you will not be tempted to accept the proposal of the man whom he mentioned in the letter that led to your well meant attempt at reconciliation."

She clasped her hands in an unconscious attitude of entreaty. "Mr. Clancy, can you give me no shred of proof, other than your unsupported word, as to this amazing story?"

Despite her vehemence, for her sweet voice was shrill and full of anguish, Doris was slowly recovering her self-possession, and the detective knew that the success or failure of his mission hung on the next few words.

"Yes," he said, "I cannot expect you to accept everything on trust. Here is the letter in question. You will see by the envelop that it was posted at Saginaw and delivered in New York."

Doris took the letter, and Clancy saw that she did not fail to examine the envelop, as he had suggested. Then

BY GORDON HOLMES



Doris Gazed at Him with Wide-open Eyes.

she read, and her lips were set tightly; though the drooped eyelids hid the gleam of fire that leaped up in her eyes when she came upon that sentence wherein the man said that he had lied for her sake.

She reread the letter, word by word; but no word was uttered for a long minute, because she was thinking deeply, and Clancy imagined that she was now furiously angry with the impostor to whom she had bared her soul.

At last she lifted her head, and her glance met the detective's squarely. "What do you want me to do?" she said.

"I want you to unmask this pretender."

"How?"

"In the first place, by coming to New York this evening, or early tomorrow, so that my chief Mr. Steingall, or I, can communicate with you without loss of time; secondly, by keeping secret all that I have said, keeping it hidden at present even from your sister or your lawyer; thirdly, by promising to come to Atlantic City, or to Saginaw, whichever place is deemed most suitable, and there carry out the plan that will be made known to you. I cannot be more precise, because we must be guided by conditions as they arise. Lastly, provided you will promise to fall in with our plans, on arriving in New York you ought to telephone your address to the bureau. You will then feel certain that you are not being hoodwinked by some mad dreamer of dreams named Clancy; but that there is a sound, reasonable, and official backing to the amazing story, as you rightly term it, that I have laid before you today."

Doris rose. Apparently, she had made up her mind with remarkable quickness and determination. "Yes," she said, "I put myself in your hands. I do not see what else I could do. Once and for all, the cloud that has darkened my life must be dispersed. I thought it had broken. Now, if not blacker than ever, it has become a dense fog. You say it is not impenetrable; so I shall help you to dispel it."

Clancy bowed himself out. In the corridor he clicked his right thumb against his fingers.

"Got him!" he said to himself, and the accompanying

noisy gesture sounded uncommonly like the locking of fetters on a felon's wrists.

CHAPTER XII.

Showing How the Net Was Spread

EITHER the Prince in whom Steingall was interested was not of much importance, or the anarchists were discreet, because, somewhat unexpectedly, the chief found himself free to go with Clancy to Atlantic City.

"Take Pullman tickets," said the little man, as they entered the Pennsylvania Station the morning before the day fixed for the adjourned inquest.

"Rather expensive, my boy," commented Steingall, with a grin.

"We may have company that will recoup us for the additional cost."

Of course, it was a mere guess; but, like most of Clancy's surmises, it was justified. A visit to the Pullman office showed that a seat had been reserved in one of the cars in the name of Tearle. It was impossible to identify any name on the list as appertaining to Mrs. Delamar; but her associate's personality was alluring, and the detectives secured two neighboring seats that happened to be at liberty in the same car. Next to the "Tearle" chair was a woman, bound for some town en route, and these four chairs were at one end of the car. When the bureau men appeared, this woman was already in possession, so much so that baggage and parcels littered the floor; but a negro porter soon piled her hatbox, suitcase, and golf clubs on the rack or disposed of them elsewhere. It was patent at a glance that she belonged to the holiday-making tribe.

Now, it chanced rather fortunately that as Steingall and Clancy were surveying the ground Tearle and Mrs. Delamar arrived on the scene, and their hasty glance into the car's interior led them to regard the three as belonging to the same party. It was a haphazard in-

"I think not. Can't plunge into details now, you know; but I want to have a talk with you before I make any further move in that direction."

"Surely you don't believe what that stupid valet told you?"

"It's hard to say. He's a sure enough John Bull, and he struck me as saying what he believed."

"It is impossible, I tell you! I am only waiting till tomorrow's affair has ended before I take steps to bring about a settlement."

"Well, good luck to you! If you prosper, I do. At present, hot as the weather is, I am suffering from cold feet. I suppose you know what that means? So long! Wire me when to expect you. We'll dine together that evening."

Mrs. Delamar held out a languid hand,—she was by no means feeling languid; but that was the correct society pose,—the door was closed, and the train started. Oddly enough, the red-faced Tearle thought that one of the men in the car, a little, wizened, dark-eyed fellow, winked at him solemnly; but of course the notion must have been an optical delusion in more senses than one, as he had never seen the man before that morning.

NOW, this scrap of conversation, the like to which might be heard any day in an important railway station, was singularly illuminative to those who could fill in blanks and supply missing names. Of course the detectives could only guess who the "stupid valet" was, and why Tearle should label him as "a sure enough John Bull"; but Steingall had in his pocket a letter from a trustworthy correspondent in the Adirondacks, in which the affray with Joe Brett was fully described, while there were not lacking comments on Claude Waverton's fine horsemanship and want of skill as a motorist.

It was a moment of real triumph for Clancy when this

the imposture had been discovered. If Claude Waverton were, in fact, Don Miguel's onetime tutor, he had no more to do with Mrs. Delamar or the death of her husband than the man in the moon; but, for all that, his unmasking would be the direct outcome of police investigations into the antecedents of Mrs. Delamar and the cause of Kyrle's death. Sometimes a scientist, searching for a new element in his test tubes, blunders on a more amazing and wholly unforeseen development, and even Detective Bureaus are favored in that way occasionally.

WHEN Clancy gave rein to his imagination in following up a train of thought, his eyes grew introspective, and his mobile face mirrored each phase of his mental flights. Now he sat facing Steingall, and on Mrs. Delamar's right. His feet were tucked under the revolving chair; so, being short, his shoulders were nearly a foot from its cushioned back. Each thin, nervous hand clutched a knee, and his eyes, to all outward semblance, were fixed meditatively on a square, brown-paper package lodged securely in a corner of the luggage rack above Steingall's head.

He looked so peculiar that the golf-playing woman eyed him with a good deal of quiet curiosity, and Mrs. Delamar gave him a searching glance before she settled down to read a newspaper.

Steingall, growing restive for want of a cigar, resolved to arouse his colleague from this day dreaming.

"I meant to ask earlier; but something prevented me," he said, leaning forward and smiling at the disconcerted expression that crossed Clancy's face when suddenly recalled to a sense of his surroundings. "What is in that parcel? It has a look of mystery. Have you discovered some long-lost relatives in New Jersey, and are you bringing them a present?"

"Can't you guess—and you a noted detective?" snapped Clancy.

At that word "detective" a quiver ran noticeably through the two women, and even a man higher up the car craned his neck. Had Clancy been able secretly and effectively to attach the wires of a galvanic battery to all of them, and then completed the circuit, he could scarcely have given them a more pronounced shock. Steingall was furiously angry at what he regarded as a blazing indiscretion; Mrs. Delamar treated her newspaper too obviously as a shield for her startled face; while the unknown woman was so surprised that she dropped her novel, and gazed at the two men with the candid interest usually displayed by the public in matters that do not concern them.

"Are you suffering from an attack of low-comedy humor this morning?" demanded Steingall, vainly attempting to convey to Clancy some notion of the absurdity of his conduct.

"Humor? You ask a question of fact, and I counter by the simple statement that the chief of the New York Detective Bureau should be able to answer it the instant it occurred to him. Is that low-comic?"

"It borders on French farce," retorted Steingall, reddening with anger; for by no manner of means could he bring himself to condone his friend's folly in thus making known their identity to a woman whom they had scrupulously avoided since the inquiry opened.

Clancy bounced up, so suddenly that Steingall drew back, and Mrs. Delamar was compelled to peep over the top of her newspaper to watch them.

"I'll prove to you that this is no comedy, but dull and deadly earnest!" cried the little man, snatching the parcel from the rack. "This is Exhibit A in the Kyrle inquiry, a witness whose testimony would be most valuable if only it were alive and had the gift of speech. It could talk too, in its own way, and frighten people out of their wits when untimely aroused. It could a tale unfold, whose lightest word would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood, make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres, thy knotted and combined locks to part, and each particular hair to stand on end, like quills upon the fretful porpoentine."

The quotation from "Hamlet," delivered with some histrionic force and marked clearness, was accompanied by a stripping of the paper wrapping off a square box, painted green, with glass front and sides. Within reposed a fine stuffed owl, which Clancy held before Steingall's indignant eyes; while it was, of course, equally visible to others.

In spite of his annoyance, the chief inspector realized that there must be some method in his subordinate's madness. He was completely at a loss to account for it; but he deemed it best now to play up to the lead given so confidently. What else could he do? Apparently Clancy meant to blab out the whole story!

"So you have brought that, have you?" he said, catching wildly at the first noncommittal words his perplexed brain could evolve.

"Yes. You remember, it was given me by an Absecon policeman. Mrs. Kyrle's gardener killed it, after it had attacked the lady in her own garden, causing her to scream out something dreadful, as the man said."

"It is a curiosity, certainly," admitted Steingall, still trying to supply Clancy with a cue; for by this time Mrs. Delamar had abandoned pretense, and was gazing



"Can't You Guess—and You a Noted Detective?" Snapped Clancy.

cident; but it led to an unlocking of tongues that otherwise might have remained mute or uninforming.

Mrs. Delamar claimed the seat labeled "Tearle." After depositing a suitcase and some magazines in it, she chatted with her escort through the open window.

"Rather a bore having to take this long journey on such a hot day," she said, when she and the other woman had exchanged critical looks, which comprised hats, costumes, gloves, and shoes in one sweeping yet accurate estimate.

"I hope you are not feeling unhappy, Feena," said Tearle, caressing a long upper lip with a well-gloved hand.

"Why should I? My tailors excelled themselves in this coat and skirt, I fancy, and no woman can be really unhappy when she is well dressed." She named a fashionable Fifth-ave. firm.

"Yes, I suppose that is true. I must learn to look on my tailor as a refuge in distress. He often has to feel that way, whether he likes it or not."

Tearle guffawed at his own wit, happily oblivious that Mrs. Delamar had mentioned her tailors by name in order to quell any lurking doubt in the other woman's mind as to the possibility of the coat and skirt being of a lower order of creation.

"How long will this business keep you on the coast?" he asked.

"I hope to return on Thursday."

"Going to Absecon?"

"No. I hate the place. Are you gadding off to Narragansett today?"

official document spoke of "the smashing right-hand blow" that had blackened Joe Brett's eyes. The words supplied one of those slender strands of testimony which, entwined with others of the same consistency, might form a rope stout enough to hang a man, or keep him in jail for twenty years. Again, Don Miguel Santander had described his Argentine estate as "remote"; in effect, it would be a place where, in the absence of good roads, horses became necessities of life and automobiles useless encumbrances.

The most singular feature of the Waverton case, to Clancy's mind, was the ease with which Charles Scott had persuaded everybody, even a wife and a valet, that he was Claude Waverton. The detective had been conscious from the outset that the divorced man's remarkable change of manners and habits invited inquiry, and one flash of blinding light, vouchsafed when he stood with Dr. Mercier on that curve of the coast road near Palm Beach, had shown him the solution of the puzzle. It did not explain reasons, of course. The motives that inspired a man like Scott, a solitary and recluse, voluntarily exiled from his native land, to change places with a fashionable rounder of the Curly Waverton type, were hidden at present. Apparently, no madder thing could have been done. Such a substitution courted failure, prompt detection, and condign punishment. It held out absolutely no hope of success. Yet, it had been almost completely successful! That was a fantastic element in an affair glowing with fantasy. And it was surpassed only by the way in which

at the two men with an alarm they were well aware of; though the other woman, who was taking in this scene with unrestrained astonishment, probably attributed her furtive eyes and parted lips to nervousness induced by the little man's eccentric behavior.

"A curio? Isn't it an inspiration too?" cried Clancy. "Don't you understand that this bird shared the secrets and the vigils of the dead man? It watched his comings and goings; for he too was a night prowler, and, it may be, met his fate at the claws of some human vampire. This very owl must have seen him starting on that last fatal voyage; or, if one might hazard a far-fetched guess, was present when his dead body was placed in the cutter by the hands of those who killed him. Can't you catch some hint of the tragedy from the creature's baleful eye? It is only glass, we know; but it has been chosen by an artist, and is wicked as a snake's. I am going to make only one small alteration in the setting. I brought back from the Palm Beach road a piece of the rock on which Claude Waverton's body was flung, and it ought to go into this glass case with the owl that hooted Mrs. Kyrle with its dying breath. Don't you agree?"

"It's a queer notion, but the two may have a good deal in common," said Steingall, mopping his forehead vigorously, because the weather was warm, and the atmosphere of the car had become sultry.

Suddenly the train plunged into the Hudson tunnel, and the change from daylight to electric lamps brought a respite.

Clancy repacked the case in the brown paper, tied the string carefully, and replaced it on the rack. Then, seemingly for the first time, he glanced at the two women, and for a fraction of a second his eyes encountered those of Mrs. Delamar. She was deathly pale; but so composed in manner that he fancied she was about to speak.

"I suppose you are pining for a smoke," he said to Steingall. "Shall we go forward?"

THEY went out, and the golfing woman caught Mrs. Delamar's contemplative gaze.

"What a peculiar man the little one is!" she exclaimed. "And do you think they really are detectives? I should not have expected to find such persons traveling in a parlor car."

"One never knows whom one may be traveling with nowadays," said Mrs. Delamar, glancing up at the square package.

"That was really a very fine owl. I wonder if it did attack the Mrs. Kyrle he spoke of? I remember reading something about the death of a man named Kyrle. Oh, I know now—the body was found in a boat. But why should the detective drag in the Waverton case?"

"Why, indeed?" sighed Mrs. Delamar, opening her writing case, and beginning a letter forthwith. If the conversation did not stop, she was sure she would scream; so she scribbled a memorandum of Clancy's words in the form of a letter to Tearle; but only to force the other woman into silence. Once again she looked at the parcel. Would her vis-à-vis go to the dining car? she wondered. If so, and the men had not returned, she would certainly pitch that horrible bird through the window, and take the consequences if its loss was attributed to her.

Oddly enough, Clancy read her thought. He claimed that he had the faculty of projecting himself into the mind of a criminal, and the destruction of the owl was just the uselessly vindictive sort of act he would expect from Mrs. Delamar.

"If you must smoke, smoke alone," he said, halting in the corridor near the smoking room. "I shouldn't be surprised if our agitated lady friend chucked her stuffed enemy out the window."

"I don't see any valid reason why I should not chuck you after it," growled Steingall.

"There you go again, O man of method!" cackled Clancy. "It gives you a pain to bump up against the least deviation from the judge-and-jury way of conducting a case. You ought to compose a glee to be sung by members of the D. B. 'On receipt of information at the Central Police Station, we marched to arrest some Yids—you could hear our heavy feet all the way down Center-st.—Sing ho! the cops and the kids! How's that for impromptu verse, with a manacle chorus?'"

"This affair is making you bughouse," said Steingall gloomily, forgetting to light the cigar from which he had already clipped the end. "Why on earth—"

"Oh, if you don't like my muse, I'll talk witness-box English. You want to know why I advertised you and myself to Mrs. Delamar? I'll tell you. She and this bloated stockbroker person must be goaded into doing something. They're behaving too well. They need spurring, whipping, scaring; anything you like, so long as they get busy and

act. And, when all is said and done, what does it matter if Mrs. Delamar learns now that she is attracting the attention of the bureau? She will know it tomorrow, in any event, and now she will be forewarned. That is what I want. If she got up to give evidence unsuspiciously, she would lie glibly, and the District Attorney would tear her to pieces in five minutes. With what result? The Coroner, the jury, the local police, not to mention the dear, addleheaded American public, would regard her as a murderess and clamor for her arrest. Now, tell me honestly, are you interested in the Kyrle or the Waverton side of this inquiry? Need I ask? We'll soon clear up the why and the wherefore of the crystals of nicotine; but can you conceive a more insurmountable barrier to any real progress in the Waverton issue than Mrs. Delamar being committed to the Sessions on a nonbailable charge?"

Steingall struck a match. "From that point of view," he muttered, "there's something to be said in favor of putting the lady on her guard."

"Bet you a dime she didn't think I was an ass! You see, she's a clever woman."

Steingall endured the stab stoically. "I shouldn't be surprised now if she sent for us tonight and told us things before the opening of the inquest tomorrow," he said.

"Good! Half an inch of Havana works marvels in you. It's a poison, but a tonic. You remind me of those beautiful Circassians who eat arsenic to make themselves more beautiful."

"She'll want to explain why she returned to the Rosery that Tuesday evening."

"We don't know that she did return; but go on. You're expanding visibly."

"We ought to be sympathetic, and get the District Attorney to follow suit."

Clancy raised himself on tiptoe, and pretended to scan Steingall's forehead anxiously. Such was the way of these two. They would quarrel ferociously, and chaff each other without mercy, when a case they were investigating together promised to expand into its final stage. And woe betide the malefactor on whose heels they were treading when they fought and bickered; for Clancy was then becoming a snare unto the evildoer's feet, and Steingall an unbreakable shackle for that same evildoer's hands!

THE train stopped to exchange the electric motor for a steam engine, and Mrs. Delamar called a porter and gave him a piece of paper, a dollar, and some whispered instructions. Steingall reentered the car and asked a passing official how long the train waited there. Three minutes, he was told, whereupon he consulted his watch; Mrs. Delamar covertly summing him up the while.

He seemed to abandon some project he was entertaining, and asked the women, with a smile, whether they preferred the window open or shut.

All this, of course, was excellent fooling. Clancy meanwhile was pelting after the porter, en route to the telegraph office.

"The lady who gave you the telegram," he gasped, "wishes to know if she signed it. She is not sure. See if she has written 'Feena.'"

The man obeyed instantly, and Clancy owned the quicker pair of eyes.

"Yes, it's all right—thank you," he said, and made for the train again. He had also seen the imperative command to John Stratton Tearle:

Follow me to Atlantic City by next train without fail. Most important. Wire.

Now, neither he nor Steingall had agreed on a course of action. They had seen Mrs. Delamar prepare to send off a message, and Clancy had skipped to the end of the corridor without a word. The remainder of the comedy was merely the working of two trained artists. Each could trust the other to do exactly the right thing. When Clancy gave Steingall the text of the telegram, his chief did not even trouble to tell him how he had brought Mrs. Delamar from the window at the psychological moment.

Nor did Clancy return to the car until five minutes after the train had started. Then he reappeared with news.

"Forbes, the District Attorney's deputy," he said, "has a section all to his lonesome two coaches ahead. Shall we join him?"

"Capital!" said Steingall, and they gathered up their baggage, including the square case.

THE golfing woman caught Mrs. Delamar's eye again. "Those men must be detectives," she said. "I recollect the name of Forbes as appearing for the District Attorney. Don't you wish they had brought him here?"

"Why?" demanded Mrs. Delamar, forcing a smile.

"Because they are extraordinarily outspoken, and it is so interesting to listen to



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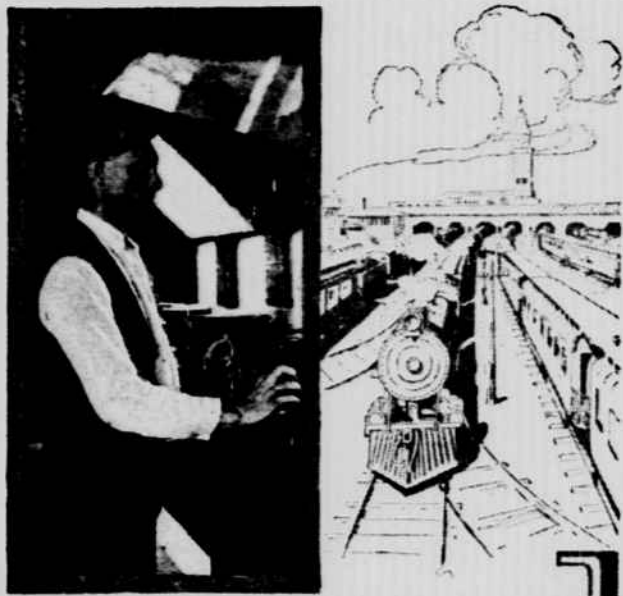


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the conversation of such people! I suppose this Absecon murder will be all in the papers tomorrow or Thursday."

"Murder!" Mrs. Delamar's voice sounded somewhat shocked. "Why do you call it murder?"

"Oh, the District Attorney would not take it up otherwise. I know a little about these matters. My husband used to be connected with the department."

"But, if I recall the incident correctly, there was an inquest, I think,—the poor man was supposed to have died from heart disease when sailing his yacht."

"You mark my words, there is more in it than can be seen; though, for the life of me, I cannot imagine why that queer little man gave his friend such a lecture about it, and before us too."

"I am going to Atlantic City—they mentioned that place, didn't they?"

"Absecon, wasn't it?"

"Yes, perhaps it was. But the inquest was held at Atlantic City, I fancy."

"So it was."

"Well," and Mrs. Delamar languidly reopened her writing case, "as I shall have plenty of time to read the papers while in a chair on the Board Walk, I may hear more of it."

The other woman was well acquainted with Atlantic City, and was half inclined to put leading questions; but, being a well bred person, refrained, and the opportunity passed.

WHEN the detectives were making for Forbes' locality Steingall saw Waverton sitting dejectedly in an intervening car. With him was a respectable looking person with an inch of dark whisker beneath each ear.

Clancy grinned. He, of course, had discovered Waverton's presence during his earlier transit.

"A nice bunch of sleuths we are!" growled Steingall when they were out of earshot. "Here is our bird in this train, and we never flushed him!"

"Name of a good little gray man!" smirked Clancy. "What a lark if he had come into our car and Mrs. Delamar's! But I'm mighty glad he didn't."

"I should like to know just why you say that," muttered Steingall.

"Because he is under suspicion, and he is such a real good fellow. Makes you feel sort of ashamed of yourself for regarding him as a villain. Is that how it strikes you, Steingall?"

"I am not quite sure yet that he is a villain," said the chief inspector. "The Waverton case has taken on a few peculiar kinks during the last fortnight, and it may have a twist or two left in it."

"Yet, if Waverton is Scott, he has committed offenses enough already to keep him in Sing Sing for the rest of his natural life. Queer how we sympathize with him. Ah, here is Forbes!"

Mrs. Delamar might have seen Waverton either at New York or on arriving at Atlantic City; but she gave no sign of the knowledge, if she possessed it. She was driven to one of the large hotels, found a telegram awaiting her there, went to her room, dressed, and dined; then, donning a hat and cloak, she telephoned to the police station, and went out.

HENCE it happened that a small conclave of officialdom at another hotel was interrupted by a waiter.

"Mr. Steingall?" he inquired.

"Yes," said Steingall.

"Lady to see you, Sir."

"Ah!" He exchanged glances with Clancy.

"*Toujours cherchez la femme!*" laughed the latter.

"This time the *femme* is *cherchez* me. You come too."

"Who is it?" demanded Forbes, realizing from the manner of the two men that the call was on business.

"Mrs. Delamar, for a five-spot!" said Steingall.

And it was!

CHAPTER XIII. Waver on Shows Fight

THE meeting between Mrs. Delamar and the representatives of the bureau ended in the tamest imaginable way. The woman had come to seek, not to give, information, and, having regard to the caliber of the men opposed to her, it was reasonable to expect that she would fail to achieve her object. She used all the feminine arts save the candor of innocence; but, unhappily for her, the one weapon missing from her armory was the only one that counted with these two clear-eyed detectives.

Clancy, notwithstanding his outspokenness in the train, now elected to emulate the stuffed owl in so far as speech was concerned, and Steingall took up the severely official attitude of hearing all that a suspected per-

son has to say, but putting no leading questions. When Mrs. Delamar found that her effective glances, her sweetly pathetic air, her soft-spoken, hesitating words, were merely being wasted, she tried a somewhat stronger line.

"Of course, I could not help overhearing what you gentlemen were saying to each other today," she said, coolly enough, "and I had some difficulty in restraining my surprise in front of our fellow passengers. Why are the authorities in New York interesting themselves in my husband's death? It seems to have arisen from natural causes, and the only strange element about it was the fact that he died in the cutter and was carried out to sea."

"You will hear the medical evidence tomorrow, Madam," said Steingall. "I cannot tell you just what conclusions the doctors have arrived at; but I am sure they will greatly modify any views you may have formed as the outcome of the first day's inquest."

Mrs. Delamar—obviously, she had sent in her name as Mrs. Kyrle—pondered this statement in silence for a few seconds. "You seem to hint at a theory of suicide," she said, wrinkling her smooth forehead as though the idea was bizarre and unacceptable.

"We do not allow ourselves the luxury of theories. We go only on ascertained facts."

"But I, at any rate, can have little of value to tell you."

"I hope you will answer fully and carefully all the questions the District Attorney will put to you," said Steingall, after a barely perceptible pause to allow Clancy to break in if so minded.

"If the authorities attach so much importance to the affair as to send all you gentlemen from New York, I suppose I ought to have legal assistance too," and the low-toned, well-modulated voice grew slightly metallic.

"I think you would be well advised to avail yourself of the aid of a good local lawyer, Madam."

"But why?"

The words were eloquent of the belief that at last she had driven this suavely aloof-mannered detective into a corner; but Steingall only smiled.

"You are your husband's sole legatee, Madam, and consequently the person most closely concerned."

"Yet I cannot see how my interests are threatened. There is no question of life insurance, or that sort of thing."

By this time Steingall knew that his colleague meant to leave Mrs. Delamar to her own devices, and he realized too that she fancied herself secure in the role of a distressed widow. How she could harbor such a delusion, in view of Clancy's earlier references to Claude Waverton, passed his comprehension. But, then, women who figure in criminal matters often adopt the fabled

policy of the ostrich, and refuse to recognize the awkward truth until the time has passed when it may be evaded with some degree of plausibility. He could picture himself too being cross-examined by an adroit lawyer, and forced to admit that he had wrung compromising statements from a suspect under the guise of a friendly chat; so he determined to bring the conversation to a close.

"You are the best judge of your own interests," he said. "I can only assure you that the circumstances attending Mr. Kyrle's death will be gone into thoroughly, and, seeing that a legal expert will represent the people, you ought to be protected by a lawyer."

During many years of a busy life he had learned the immense importance of choosing the right words in circumstances like the present, and he did not hesitate now over a phrase that might well have carried a chill to the heart and brain of one who risked being charged with having committed a murder. But Mrs. Delamar did not wince. She rose gracefully, said she would give careful consideration to his advice, favored Clancy with an inscrutable smile, and took her departure.

WELL, not much forrader, are we?" growled Steingall, when a cab had rattled away with the visitor.

"Some folk might think so," was the oracular reply.

"Don't you agree?"

"She has a strong card up her sleeve," fended Clancy.

"Waverton, as the king of trumps, I suppose."

"It looks like it."

"At any rate, I shall play the ace tomorrow. Is it worth while giving an eye to that scamp Tearle?"

"O-ho! he's a scamp, is he? Since when have you arrived at that opinion?"

"I forgot to tell you that I met a man the other evening who knew him in Wall Street, which he had to quit in a hurry. He had some pull with the politicians, and got a job in connection with an Indian Reservation out Arizona way; but he had to quit that too, and now he plays poodle dog at the disposal of unattached females in summer resorts or in Florida. He has managed always to keep within the letter of the law; but decent people shunt him as soon as someone blows in who knows his record."

"So you mean to play Waverton's game?" chirped Clancy, with a bantering smile.

"To that extent, at any rate," and Steingall chewed a cigar ferociously. "What about watching him?"

Clancy knew that the "him" alluded to was Tearle. "A waste of energy," he said contemptuously. "This affair will be fought out by two women and one man, and the man's name is Scott, alias Waverton."

To be continued next Sunday

IN THE PURPLE OCTOBER

Continued from page 9

road. She had seen the glint of a gun barrel in the thicket as a stray sunbeam fell upon it, and she well knew why a mountaineer was hidden in ambush. Atkins wrenched himself loose from her grasp and knocked her hands aside with his fist.

"Curse you for a—" he began in a blaze of wrath, when a sharp report rang out from the woods above the road, and he fell back against the household plunder in the wagon, the unfinished sentence ending in a gasping groan. The horses plunged and would have run; but the instinct of self preservation overcame the woman's first fright, and she snatched the lines from the relaxed hold of her husband and held the frightened animals until they became quiet. They were tired from their long, hard journey, and a gunshot meant nothing to them beyond the nervous start its unexpectedness gave them.

As quickly as she could, Mary turned to her husband. He had scarcely struggled, and there was no mark upon him to show where the fatal bullet had struck, except a little frayed place on the left breast of his coat as if a nail had jagged a hole in the cloth. His face showed no sign of fear, or that the knowledge of what his wife had seen in the thicket had come to him before the bullet reached him. The woman saw only the ugly lines, fixed forever now, that came with the last words to her. He had gone from earth with a curse on his lips for her, and as she looked into the cold face, her own hardened. There were no tears in her eyes when she took up the lines again and started the team along the lonely mountain road. The body of her husband sat beside her, sagging back upon the load in the wagon. There was not room for it elsewhere, and she could not walk and drive.

At a turn in the road a quarter of a mile ahead she saw a gray-haired mountaineer sink out of sight in the bushes. She recognized him as being on the other side, and she knew he had threatened her husband; but there was no vengeance in her heart as she saw him, nor had she any desire to give his name to her friends when her story should be told. The feeling was vague and undefined, and she wondered at it; but it did not leave her as she drove on, and she remembered now that she had heard a bird singing in the thicket, and that it was a sunbeam, not a shadow, that fell across the gun barrel she had seen before the shot that had widowed her.

It was six miles down the valley to her home, and she tried to think what her mother would say to her when she should arrive with what she was bringing unexpectedly. She was frightened when she had spoken to her husband among the rhododendrons, for she knew that the bullet from ambush did not always spare a woman; but she felt safe now with the dead body beside her, a coarse, colored handkerchief thrown over the face. She did not realize what might have been horrible to some in her position, because more than once she had seen mountain funerals with the pall bearers sitting on the coffin in the farm wagon that served as a hearse. She met no one as she drove slowly along, seeking, she could not think why, the smoother parts of the road, and she was careful not to jar the vehicle.

SHE had gone five miles toward home, when she was startled by the sight of a man in the woods by the roadside, and she pulled up her horses as if to stop; but, remembering, she looked neither to the left nor

NO OTHER WAY

Drawings by Howard Giles

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CHAPTER XIII. (Continued)

Waverton Shows Fight

THE "playing of Waverton's game" was accomplished in a manner that became perfectly clear when the reports of the inquest were published; for the Coroner's court had not been opened five minutes before the local reporters realized that they were, as they put it colloquially, "in for a big thing," and the headline "Sensational Developments" quickly made its appearance in the paragraphs published in the evening newspapers.

Dr. Gilman was the first witness called, and his words stirred the pulses of all who listened. "When I testified in this inquiry a fortnight ago," he said, "I stated that the general appearance of the body found in the cutter was compatible with death from natural causes. Although, even at that early date, I had reason to think differently, I deemed it advisable, subject to the approval of the Coroner, not to mention my suspicions until I had verified them. In the meantime I have made a careful analysis of the contents of the stomach, as well as other organic parts of the body directly affected by irritant matter introduced by way of the alimentary canal, and I have no hesitation now in saying that Mr. Kyrle was poisoned."

At that word "poisoned," a curious thrill ran through the small court, which was crowded to its utmost capacity. Mrs. Delamar and Waverton had not met until they saw each other across a wide table in the well of the court, and the woman had been manifestly surprised at sight of him, while she flushed with annoyance when Waverton acknowledged her presence with a reserved bow.

But her self control was marvelous, and she appeared to devote her attention solely to the business in hand, and chatted with a local lawyer, Traherne by name, whom she had instructed that morning to watch the proceedings on her behalf.

It was easy to see that the doctor's emphatic announcement of the cause of her husband's death gave her a decided and unpleasant shock. After one long stare of fright and incredulity, in which doctor and detectives shared equally, she turned to Traherne and evidently urged him to put some questions to the witness instantly. He, of course, whispered an assurance that he would be given every opportunity later to elicit any point he might deem pertinent to the inquiry. Meanwhile, Mrs. Delamar must not interfere nor hinder him in taking notes; for he was a shrewd man, and he guessed at once that the Atlantic City mystery was about to shed some of its mysteriousness.

"Have you ascertained the agent, Dr. Gilman?" said the Coroner calmly. He was devoid of "nerves," and the scratching of his pen provided the only sound in the room when the first slight hum of excitement had died away.

"Yes, the man had swallowed an excessive dose of crystals of nicotine,—sufficient, in my estimation, to kill a hundred men."

The reporters duly recorded the sensation made by this testimony, and the comment did not exaggerate its effect on the few privileged onlookers who had obtained admission to the inquest.

The doctor forthwith entered into a technical description of the effects of crystals of nicotine; but when the Coroner asked if he had formed any definite view as to whether the deceased man had taken the poison when in the cutter or had been placed after death in the seat where he was found, Traherne jumped up.

"I respectfully submit that the witness ought not to answer that question at this stage," he said.

"For whom do you appear?" demanded the Coroner.

"For the widow, Mrs. Kyrle."

"Is it in her interests that you object to Dr. Gilman stating his opinion?"

"By no means. I am swayed rather by my own notion of the proper procedure. Mrs. Kyrle is, of course, anxious that every fact should be made known."

The Coroner nodded to Dr. Gilman.

"I said 'every fact,' Sir," continued Traherne, rather red faced, since he was doubtful of the right line to follow.

"I think the witness should be allowed to proceed," said the Coroner quietly, and the lawyer sat down again.

He caught a dry smile in the corner of Forbes's lips, and understood that he had not benefited his client by the protest. In the result this impression was an unfortunate one, as he did not interfere later when he might have stopped some really damaging, though quite irrelevant, testimony being placed on the record.

"I cannot decide that very important point," said Dr. Gilman, when he felt that the legal barrier which Traherne sought to interpose was not to become effective. "The contortions of pain that the poison would induce, in what I may describe in simple language as its middle stage, would render it absolutely impossible for any human being to remain calmly seated at the tiller of a yacht. But, in the case of a man endowed with a strong



Steingall Had Something Sarcastic to Say; but Forbore.

will, clinging obstinately to a dominant purpose, and wishful to create an impression that he had died from what is popularly known as heart disease, he might have struggled back into a natural position during the last phase of a stupor developing into insensibility. That is possible. The balance of probability is that the body was placed in the boat after death."

Another doctor, and the State analyst, confirmed Dr. Gilman's testimony, and the local prosecutor, prompted by Forbes, asked each man only one question.

"Would any well conducted drugstore supply a large quantity of crystals of nicotine to any ordinary customer?"

In each case the answer was an emphatic no.

THE next witness came as a veritable surprise to everyone in court save the few who knew why he was there. Two men, apparently foreigners, and certainly strangers in Atlantic City, were sitting apart, shielded from all inquiry by the detectives and the local Chief of Police. One of them rose and smilingly touched his companion's shoulder when the Coroner called "José Vuilmo!" The man who had paid no heed to his own name was the proprietor of the drugstore on Everglades-ave., Palm Beach, for he had only a hazy notion what the court was saying; but the other man proved to be an interpreter, and it was soon learned that Vuilmo had sold an ounce of crystals of nicotine to an American on February 22, as his counter record would show, and the name of the American was Claude Waverton.

The reporters were writing at top speed. Mrs. Delamar's face had exhibited a ghastly pallor from the instant she heard the druggist's name, given correctly to the Coroner by the interpreter, whereas Claude Waverton had watched the man's appearance with a bored inattentiveness that yielded to curiosity only when he found that, for the sake of accuracy, the testimony would be delivered in Spanish.

To these three, then, seemingly busied with documents and notes, but actually devouring each slightest change of expression in Mrs. Delamar's livid features, to which no more marked foil could be provided than Waverton's heedlessness, there was forthcoming the amplest confirmation of an amazing fact. The stout and voluble Spaniard was to Mrs. Delamar a figure of terrible and sinister portent; but to Claude Waverton he presented no such frightening spectacle. The one knew, and dreaded, the coming revelation; the other was wholly unconscious of it. Yet, had he been the man he represented himself as being, he could not have forgotten that remarkable purchase of a deadly poison; nor, howsoever innocent his intent then, would he be blind to its grave significance now.

Of course, none of the three gave credence to Waverton's pretense of a lost memory, and it was almost amusing to them individually, though their set faces were masks of indifference, when the suspect kindled into angry annoyance at hearing himself named as the buyer.

"Nonsense!" he cried fiercely, without waiting for the interpreter to explain what Vuilmo had said, and he sprang upright, all aquiver with wrath and resentment; for he was in the position of a man wandering idly through a flat and dreary country who finds himself suddenly on the brink of an unfathomable abyss.

"You must not interrupt the witness," said the Cor-

ner, glancing sharply at the tall, thin, well dressed individual who had been thus stirred into activity and disclaimer.

"But there is some ridiculous error," cried Waverton in white heat.

"Are you represented by a lawyer?"

"No. If it was intended that this cock-and-bull story should be made public today, why was I not warned of it?"

"No comments, please," said the Coroner. "When the witness has concluded his evidence you may question him, if you so desire, or wait until another occasion, when you will have procured legal assistance."

Waverton sat down, with an impatient gesture, and now at last the interpreter was free to go on with the Spaniard's statement. Up to this point the great majority of people in court were ignorant of Waverton's identity, and wondered why the stranger had protested so vehemently.

DURING this somewhat striking scene Mrs. Delamar had endeavored to catch Waverton's eye; but in vain. Though she had the aspect of a woman stretched on the rack, she strove to conquer her agitation, and hastily scribbled a note, which she asked Clancy, of all men, to hand across the table.

The detective obeyed with a smile, and Waverton opened the folded paper. He read:

Please try and recollect that you did buy the poison. The man is telling the truth. I can explain everything fully. FEENA.

He crumpled the message in his right hand—be sure that three pairs of watchful eyes saw which hand he used—and seemed not to pay the least regard to it, devoting himself rather to a close following of Vuilmo's words.

"You are sure of the name?" went on the Coroner, blandly resuming his task as though nothing remarkable had happened.

Yes, the witness had copied it from the gentleman's card.

"Do you see him in court?"

Vuilmo did not wait for the interpreter. "Certainly. That is he; only thinner and greatly changed since his accident. I heard of the affair, and remembered the name," he said in Spanish.

Then he looked straight at Waverton, and it was not to be doubted that he was telling the truth. Every eye was bent on the bronzed man sitting at the table; but he only smiled scornfully, and met Vuilmo's mild gaze without flinching.

"Are you positive on that point?" persisted the Coroner.

The druggist gratified the court by indulging in a real Latin shrug, with outstretched hands, palms upward and wide apart. "The person of scientific mind avoids the pretense of too great certainty," he said. "I used the word 'certainly,' I admit; but I only meant that I think this gentleman is my customer of February 22. He resembles him; he has the same distinguished air; his voice is the same, though I should be better able to judge if he spoke in Spanish, because my customer asked for the drug in that language."

Waverton, with fine self control, waited until the interpreter had finished and the Coroner had ceased writing; then he stood up. "Will you allow me to exchange

a few words with the witness in his own tongue?" he asked.

The Coroner hesitated. He saw that Forbes was ostentatiously making notes, and that Traherne was waiting for a move by Forbes. "I think the course you suggest would be reasonable," he said. "It would help Vuilmo to be more definite."

Waverton at once asked the Spaniard if the man who bought the poison spoke like an American possessing an ordinary command of the language, or was his diction as fluent and his pronunciation as good as his (Waverton's).

It was distinctly amusing to watch José Vuilmo's face when he heard the accents of his native tongue delivered with the accurate ease of one who spoke it without fault or effort. He gazed spellbound at Waverton, and then turned appealingly to the Coroner.

"See here a mistake the most unfortunate!" he cried. "This is not the gentleman who came to my establishment. This one is a veritable Argentine; the other was altogether American. I see now that I was in error; but permit me to observe, Señor Judge, that I remarked on the habit of the scientific mind—"

He was stopped by the interpreter, who forthwith translated Waverton's question and the witness's answer.

WAVERTON resumed his seat again, and favored Steingall with a satisfied smile. At the same time he could not avoid Mrs. Delamar's glance, and he read therein a profound amazement which conveyed a warning that he had discomfited the druggist at the price of creating active distrust in a far more dangerous quarter. But he was evidently a man of singular strength of will; for he looked fully satisfied with his achievement, and the angry flush raised by the unexpected use of his name quickly gave way to a contented expression which, to Mrs. Delamar, was almost more bewildering than the ticklish turn taken by the evidence.

Prompted by Forbes, the prosecutor hammered in the druggist's disclaimer. "You believe now that the Claude G. Waverton present in court is not the Claude G. Waverton who bought the crystals of nicotine?" he asked.

"But no, Señor," was the answer, and Waverton's brow frowned again; because, perhaps, of the awkward manner in which the prosecutor had framed the question.

He took thought while the Coroner's pen scratched industriously, and broke in when the lawyer was about to proceed. "That is a somewhat unreasonable way to establish the fact aimed at. Why not ask the witness to state that, if I am Claude G. Waverton, the person who purchased the poison must have deceived him by using my name?"

"You may put that point when I have finished," said Forbes.

"But I protest now against the method you are adopting. There are not two Claude G. Wavertons."

The attorney deigned to appear interested. "We are not settling a matter of title to the Waverton property," he said. "The witness has stated that Claude G. Waverton came to his shop in Palm Beach, and you have got him to say that you are not the Claude G. Waverton in dispute. What more do you want?"

"I want you to remember that you are representing the State, and that you have no right to distort the evidence from the meaning honestly attached to it by Señor José Vuilmo."

"How dare you say that I am distorting evidence?"

"And how dare you hint that I am not Claude G. Waverton?"

"I did nothing of the sort."

"What, when you flippantly allude to 'settling a matter of title,' and that I am 'not the Claude G. Waverton in dispute'? Have a care, Sir!"

IF a mild-eyed sheep, tied to the slaughtering block, were suddenly to scarify his would-be slayer with stern threats and words of hot indignation, the worthy tradesman thus confounded could not have been more surprised than Forbes and the two detectives. The lawyer had certainly gone rather far in his disdain of one whom his legal mind now regarded as an impostor; but he no more expected this fiery denunciation than that the Coroner should hurl an inkpot at him.

Even Steingall was momentarily stupefied; but Clancy kept his head, and flashed a glance imploring caution, so Forbes temporized.

"I am not moved by fear of criticism," he said, addressing the Coroner, who, for his own reasons, let the two fight it out; "but I may as well explain that Mr. Waverton is working himself into a passion about nothing. I was seeking only to emphasize a point in his favor—"

"You must do it differently, then," interrupted Waverton, and his contemptuous tone brought a flush to the lawyer's forehead.

"Of course, I cannot be dictated to!" said Forbes hotly.

The Coroner raised his hand. "I see no objection to a subsidiary question, framed as Mr. Waverton suggests, being put to the witness," he said, and Clancy blessed the worthy man under his breath.

This was done, and the "breeze" died down. Traherne tried to fan it into activity again by inducing the druggist to reiterate that the buyer of the poison did closely resemble Claude G. Waverton, and that his (the witness's) altered belief arose largely from hearing Waverton speak Spanish so well. He wanted to know too why New York officials should appear in a New Jersey court, and threatened to have the proceedings quashed as irregular.

But neither Forbes nor Waverton paid heed to this hair splitting, and Traherne subsided. Forbes simply demanded that the address, "Asphodel House, Palm Beach," given by "the person who described himself as Claude G. Waverton" (whereat the bearer of the name

smiled grimly, feeling that he had worsted his opponent) should be noted, and José Vuilmo was permitted to retire.

Then another rustle of excitement ran through the court, because the Coroner raised his head, and, peering through benignant gold spectacles, called:

"Mrs. Josephine Kyrle!"

CHAPTER XIV. Mrs. Delamar's Ordeal

MRS. DELAMAR had dispensed with the veil she usually affected when in the neighborhood of Absecon or in any part of New Jersey where she might be known as Mrs. Kyrle. Though wearing black, she could hardly be said to be in mourning. The smart coat and skirt, an imported hat, a lace blouse, a pair of suede gloves, conveyed an artistic suggestion of widowhood without any loss of elegance or charm. She was really a strikingly handsome woman, and when she stood in the witness box against a somewhat harsh background of drab-painted wall she looked like a Morland portrait divested of its frame.

Even the Coroner was impressed, and his voice grew almost sympathetic when he explained that, as a supplement to her testimony given previously, the police wished enlightenment on other matters that had come to their knowledge.

She bowed silently. She had guessed already the nature of the ordeal she would be called on to endure, and she meant to go through with it as creditably as might be. It was useless to struggle, and a complete readiness to answer questions might soften the heart of that dour-faced descendant of some Scottish Covenantant who represented the District Attorney.

Forbes, observing the fiction of working through the local prosecutor, was already on his feet and glancing through some papers. Suddenly he raised his eyes and shot out his first question; though even he was elaborately polite, and his manner gave no hint of the coming storm.

"I have read through the testimony you gave at the opening of this inquiry," he said, "and I find you stated that you left Absecon for New York on the Tuesday of the week in which your husband died. Is that correct?"

"Yes, in a sense."

"May I take it that it is also incorrect, in a sense?"

"I left Absecon on that day; but did not travel direct to New York."

"Ah. Where did you sleep on the Tuesday night?"

"In the Board Walk Hotel, Atlantic City."

"You came to Atlantic City, took a room in the Board Walk Hotel, went out, returned late at night, and traveled to New York early next day,—is that an accurate summary of your movements?"

"Yes."

"Now, will you kindly tell the court why you acted

in this way, and what you did during a two hours' visit to Absecon, not to your own house, and during your later absence from the Atlantic City hotel?"

Forbes was an adroit lawyer, and the very form taken by his questions told the mystified Traherne that he wished to keep the witness clear of involuntary pitfalls. Lest she might be tempted to prevaricate, he revealed his hand clearly, and put forth a confident display of knowledge of her devious comings and goings on the day Kyrle was last seen alive, which was intended to warn her not to attempt to mislead the authorities. Traherne, who, of course, had received no definite instructions, realized that the District Attorney would not follow this line unless he was very sure of his ground, and was, moreover, only leading up to matters of much greater importance. He watched his client closely for any signal of distress, when he would intervene on one pretext or another, and at any rate gain time for her to collect her thoughts; but she was quite self possessed, though very pale, and did not take her eyes off the grim, sharp-faced, though smooth-spoken, lawyer who shared the secrets of the police.

CLANCY, alert as a jack rabbit, admitted to himself at this juncture that he was puzzled by Waverton's behavior. The latter was watching Mrs. Delamar with curious interest. He might have been a man who now saw her and heard her voice for the first time. His attitude was wholly detached and impersonal. Once his glance flitted to the rows of absorbed people in court, and he smiled. Clancy literally put his thought into words.

"You honest Atlantic City tradesmen," he was musing, "are giving your divided attention to a matter that you will never understand. There are issues in this case not to be decided by the combined wits of the Coroner and your good selves."

Clancy nodded his head in frank agreement, and Steingall whispered:

"What is it?"

"Nothing," said Clancy.

"Is that why you nodded?"

"Yes."

Steingall had something sarcastic to say; but forbore, for Mrs. Delamar was speaking.

"I remained in Absecon because I had to wait two hours for a boat or train to Atlantic City," she said. "My husband did not wish my presence at the Rosery; so I strolled to a farm where I was known. I bought some milk there. If necessary, I can give you the farmer's name."

"Not at all." Forbes conveyed that he would not dream of doubting her word in this matter.

Mrs. Delamar signified her appreciation of his courtesy by an expressive glance. Thus far, they resembled antagonists engaged in the punctilio of a duel; but steel was bound to grate on steel by and by.

"From Absecon," she said, "I went back to Atlantic City, and late at night returned again to Absecon, at my husband's wish, and received two packages from him. Altogether, I had a very wearying and apparently aimless day; but my husband was morose and eccentric, so I humored him. The packages were intended for the post, and, luckily, I remember the addresses. One was addressed to Professor Leon Anthony, M. A., Harvard University, and the other to a bank on Broadway, New York. Let me explain that my husband was a man of peculiar, almost fantastic, ideas, and he insisted on a sort of secrecy and want of purpose in my movements that day. We did not agree very well,—in fact, during recent years we have lived apart,—but he gave me to understand that he was going to Europe, as a member of an expedition to Morocco, and that his return was doubtful. He informed me that the packages contained a scientific diary and papers referring to his personal affairs, that he had described himself in his letters as already en route to the Cunard pier at New York, and that he wished to convey the impression that the Rosery had been practically closed since that morning. It was arranged between us, however, that he would really not go farther afield than Paris, until—until each of us had obtained freedom through the divorce court, and, as I was most anxious to have my marriage dissolved, I agreed to humor him with regard to the broken journeys of that day. Still, I could not help feeling a little



"I Must Introduce a Distressing Element," Said Forbes.

doubtful about their oddity; so I took the precaution of registering the two packets at the Atlantic City postoffice next morning, and have carried the receipts in my purse ever since. Here they are."

Producing a small gold purse from an inner pocket, and thus revealing the purpose of a gold chain that hung round her neck, Mrs. Delamar took two tiny slips of paper from the purse, and held them forth. She seemed to wish to give them to the District Attorney; but he indicated that the Coroner should examine them first.

AS a matter of fact, Forbes had never received a greater setback from a witness. He was expecting a plausible story,—some feminine expedient that would seem to reconcile her suspicious movements with her subsequent silence,—but he certainly did not look for a candor that went far beyond the knowledge gleaned by the police. For the moment Steingall and Clancy shared the lawyer's embarrassment. Mrs. Delamar had taken the wind out of their sails so effectually that they even forgot to watch Waverton. They knew, better than the Coroner or anyone else, that she was probably speaking the truth, and, indeed, after a moment's scrutiny of the postoffice receipts, the Coroner said:

"These receipts bear out the witness' words. The addresses are those she has named, and they carry the date stamp of the Atlantic City postoffice."

A perceptible wave of interest ran through the court. Opinion was distinctly in Mrs. Delamar's favor. With few exceptions, nearly all present settled down comfortably to hear a thoroughly interesting bit of cross examination. They were not disappointed. Not often is a man chosen to represent the District Attorney because he happens to be somebody's nephew, and, although Forbes might carry no armament other than heavy artillery, there was metal in his broadsides.

"I am much obliged to you for the straightforward explanation you have given of events on the evening of the day that, by common consent, is fixed as the date of your husband's death, Mrs. Kyrle," he said, "and I want you to tell us now why you withheld these facts during the opening of the inquest a fortnight ago."

"That is a simple matter," and Mrs. Delamar smiled with a sad sweetness that reached many hearts. "In common with the rest of the world, I thought my husband died from natural causes, and I saw no reason why my unhappy domestic affairs should be published broadcast. Not until I heard the medical evidence in court today had I the slightest reason to believe that he had been poisoned."

She did not hesitate about using that ugly word "poisoned," and the mere sound of it warmed Forbes to his task.

"As you say," he commented dryly, "Mr. Kyrle was poisoned, and we have it on unquestionable authority that the agent was nicotine in its deadliest form. Now, Mrs. Kyrle, you have heard the statement made by José Vuilmo. Have you anything to tell us that may serve to clear up the point in dispute between him and—Mr. Claude G. Waverton?"

THE slight pause before Waverton's name was not lost on the one man whom it affected more than all others. "Is that question properly framed, Mr. Coroner?"

"Really, Sir, I must protest against these interruptions!" and Forbes bristled with indignation.

"You may protest as much as you like: I refuse to sit here and listen to your wilful twisting of facts!" said Waverton, and Clancy, brought back to the real significance of the drama being played before spectators unconscious of its quality, found himself regarding Waverton as a man fighting for his life against overwhelming odds.

"I don't quite see what ground you have for objecting to Mr. Forbes' words, Mr. Waverton," said the Coroner.

"Thank you," said the lawyer hastily; but Waverton would not allow him to continue Mrs. Delamar's examination as if the point were settled in his favor.

"Pardon me one instant," and Waverton's voice was singularly calm and dominant. "I have no wish whatever to interfere with the proceedings; but I must insist, with respect, that between José Vuilmo and me there is no dispute. He said that a man representing himself to be Claude G. Waverton bought crystals of nicotine at his shop; but he also stated that I was not the man in question."

The Coroner gazed mildly at Forbes. "Of course, there is a material difference—" he began hesitatingly; but the District Attorney saw that he had blundered, and made haste to rectify his error.

"Permit me to say, Sir," he cried, "that I may, perhaps, have chosen my words carelessly. Let me amend them. Now, Mrs. Kyrle, to pass on, can you throw any light on José Vuilmo's testimony? He told us that some person, representing himself to be Claude G. Waverton, purchased an ounce of crystals of nicotine on February 22. Do you know anything about the transaction?"

MRS. DELAMAR, in her turn, had been vouchsafed a breathing space. She had to elect instantly whether she would admit that the Mrs. Kyrle little known and seldom seen at Absecon was none other than the notorious Mrs. Delamar, or strive to retain the disguise that had protected her so effectually in the past. Yet had she really any choice in the matter? Had not these wretched detectives unearthed her past, and dared she risk the destruction of a credibility thus far established by denying a double existence so capable of incontestable proof? The lawyer had contrived to place the onus of decision on her shoulders; since he did not even appear to assume that she was the tenant of the house at Palm Beach. Her face blanched to a more sorrowful wanness; but she did not falter.

"Yes," she said, "it was I who lived in Asphodel House. Mr. Claude G. Waverton was my guest during March and April, and I sent him to buy the crystals of nicotine. I am at a loss to understand why he should deny the fact, or why José Vuilmo should withdraw his first emphatic recognition of Mr. Waverton. I am quite aware that Mr. Waverton is suffering from the effects of an accident; but—"

"Let us keep to the thread of the story," said Forbes hastily. "You have been remarkably candid—"

Traherne thought he saw an opportunity, and took it. Up he bounced. "The District Attorney asked my client—I quote his very words—if she could throw light on José Vuilmo's testimony. I think she ought to be allowed to state her impressions fully."

"Impressions are not evidence," growled Forbes. "Exactly; but why take one part of my client's views and reject another?"

"Very well," snapped Forbes; though his rival fancied that this alacrity to yield the point suggested a trap. "What were you about to say, Mrs. Kyrle?"

"Only this," was the meek response. "If Mr. Waverton's memory is affected, he cannot be positive that it was not he who went to Vuilmo's store. Moreover, Vuilmo did not recognize him, and I am quite sure he executed my commission."

Certainly, here was a hard nut for Waverton to crack. The woman's words carried conviction. Clancy hugged himself silently; Steingall, deprived of a cigar, chewed a penholder, and his big, prominent blue eyes passed rapidly from Mrs. Delamar to Waverton, and from Waverton to Mrs. Delamar. Both he and Clancy noted that the man and woman exchanged a steady, contemplative look as Forbes bent over his papers. There was neither hostility nor veiled intent in that silent interplay of glances; but rather curiosity, inquisition, an acknowledgment of something new and strange in their relations, whereby the man was troubled and the woman almost bewildered.

NOW, before we go any further in this matter of the purchase of a poison, Mrs. Kyrle, I must introduce a somewhat distressing element into the inquiry," said Forbes, pouncing suddenly on the witness as if he were a hawk striking at a pigeon. "Your name is Josephine Kyrle; but you are, I take it, known to a very much wider circle of people as Josephine Delamar?"

"Yes," said the witness faintly, with just a hint of a sob in her voice.

Some shrewd wits among the uninformed listeners present in court were already alive to the imminence of this astonishing disclosure; but to the multitude it came with sledgehammer force and more than sledgehammer directness. Mrs. Kyrle the fascinating and dangerous Mrs. Delamar—the wicked heroine of the Waverton divorce case—the woman whose name truth, which is often a synonym for scandal, had linked with so many bizarre incidents in the smart society of Florida and New York? Well, wonders would never cease! The descriptive reporter wrote, "At this statement, every ear was agog, and every eye in court was turned on the beautiful woman on the witness stand; while she herself, shrinking under this avalanche of scrutiny, was almost moved to tears."

At any rate, the cat was out of the bag from that instant, and the attention of every daily newspaper in the country was focused on a trivial inquest in lively and pleasure-seeking Atlantic City.

"In fact," went on the dry legal voice mercilessly, "a little while prior to your husband's death you had figured as correspondent in a suit for divorce brought by Mrs. Waverton against her husband, Claude G. Waverton?"

"Yes," and the response was even more muffled, though distinct enough.

Traherne moved uneasily. He was unable to gage the issues lying behind these revelations; but he noticed that Forbes appeared to expect him to intervene, so he kept still.

"I believe too," said Forbes, after waiting for the interruption that came not, "that you have been, and still are, on terms of close friendship with a certain John Stratton Tearle?"

"I know him."

"You meet him constantly, and write to him when you both happen to be separated?"

"I see him frequently and sometimes write to him."

"He reserved a seat for you in a Pullman from New York yesterday, and accompanied you to the Pennsylvania Station?"

"Yes."

"Was John Stratton Tearle, by any chance, at Absecon, or Atlantic City, or anywhere in New Jersey, on the day you last saw your husband alive?"

"Not to my knowledge."

"Are you not aware that he was supposed to be in Narragansett Pier at that period?"

"Yes. I believe so."

Forbes rustled his papers with the air of a man who was performing a profoundly disagreeable task; though, in reality, his chagrin arose from the witness' sudden liking for answers that were either monosyllables or their equivalents. She had spoken freely enough before, and he hoped she would keep on in the same vein. However, she had adopted the safer method of meeting a forensic attack; so he had to rest content.

WAS your husband acquainted with John Stratton Tearle?" he demanded.

"Yes."

"Were they friends?"

"At one time."

"How long since?"

"Nearly six years ago."

"Come, now, Mrs. Kyrle, you were not so tongue tied a few minutes since. Can you not be more explicit?"

"What do you want me to say?" asked the witness, raising her eyes in a pathetic glance at the Coroner.

"My friend is hard to please," put in Traherne, taking what he fancied was meant as a cue to himself from his client. "At one time he declines to hear Mrs. Kyrle's explanations, and in the next breath he asks for them."

"I don't wish to press the witness to utter a word more than she wishes," said Forbes.

"But where is this testimony leading us? How does it concern the death of Mr. Kyrle? Is the New York District Attorney endeavoring to establish a conspiracy to bring about this poor man's death, and are his wife, Claude G. Waverton, this John Stratton Tearle, and possibly several other people, looked on as parties to it?"

"If you raise any serious objection to the line I am following, I am quite prepared to leave the inquiry where it stands—at present," said Forbes blandly.

But Traherne was too old a bird to be caught with that sort of legal chaff. He laughed. "Really, we New Jersey people are not quite so slow witted as the District Attorney evidently believes us to be," he cried, confident that this jibe at a New Yorker would tickle his audience. "I am not endeavoring to hamper inquiry,—indeed, my client welcomes it,—but it is one thing to elicit the truth concerning a distressing fatality, and quite another to embark on a fishing expedition. Ask what you please, Mr. Forbes, and you will be answered; but you must not expect Mrs. Kyrle to provide you with material for what practically amounts to a cross examination."

Forbes nodded. He was more at home in this sort of sparring than in forcing unpalatable revelations from a pretty woman. "Since your lawyer thinks I ought to speak plainly, Mrs. Kyrle, I shall do so," he said. "I believe you met John Stratton Tearle in Paris before you married Mr. Kyrle?"

"Yes," and the witness's tones were stronger now.

"Did your friendship with him provide the first cause of the quarrel between your husband and yourself?"

"Yes."

"Is it correct to say that Tearle introduced Mr. Waverton to you?"

"Yes."

"Very well. That ends this branch of the affair for the time being. Now will you tell us why you got Mr. Waverton to buy crystals of nicotine at a Palm Beach drugstore?"

"My husband wrote and asked me to procure the poison. He said that in New Jersey a layman could not obtain such a quantity without great difficulty, whereas the regulations in Florida were not so strict."

"Did he say why he wanted the drug?"

"As nearly as I can recollect, he was engaged in investigating the vegetable poison used by the obi men of the West Indies, and needed the nicotine to conduct certain experiments."

"How did you forward it to him?"

"By mail."

"And did Mr. Claude G. Waverton bring it to you in person?"

"Unquestionably. He laughed about it, and told me to retain my husband's letter, because it was a rather strange commission."

"Have you that letter?"

"I believe so. Had I known that all this—all this dreadful exposé would be made today, I should have searched for it."

FOR some reason best known to himself, Forbes concluded his examination at a moment when the court's sympathies were veering back to a woman who might have sinned, but was certainly being prosecuted by Fate.

The Coroner was evidently swayed by some such sentiment, since he asked, very gently, if the witness could suggest any motive for her husband's peculiar stipulations as to her movements on the fatal Tuesday.

"I hope it is not a cruel thing to say, but I am beginning to fear that he meant to kill himself that night, and was contriving matters in such a way that suspicion would be cast on me."

Mrs. Delamar had soon recovered from the emotion that shook her utterance in responding to Forbes' concluding question, and she put forward a theory that was at least reasonable, in a voice that was firm, if not slightly metallic.

"No secret was made of the purchase of the poison?" went on the Coroner.

"None whatever."

"Did Mr. Waverton know your husband?"

"To the best of my belief, he had never seen him. I don't think he even knew his name."

"Then Mr. Waverton could have no strong motive for concealing his share in the transaction at Palm Beach—about the poison, I mean?"

"I can imagine none."

"Will you endeavor to find the letter your husband wrote prior to February 22?"

"Certainly."

The Coroner thanked Mrs. Kyrle for the way in which she had given her testimony, and she descended from the witness stand.

JUST then Waverton and Clancy were engaged in what might be described as an ocular duel. Each man knew that the whole scene in court had been arranged with the skill of a dramatist. Waverton had been deliberately led to believe that the police attached the most grave significance to the buying of the poison; whereas the incident, though important, was now whittled down to a mere link in a chain of evidence that pointed to the suicide of Kyrle. Hence, the disquieting testimony given by José Vuilmo had been meant as a bait for Waverton, and he had swallowed

Continued on page 18



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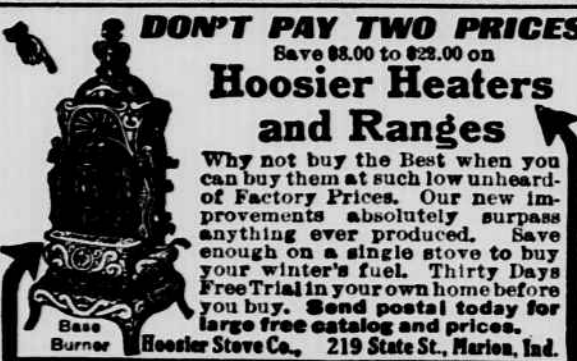
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bow and stern, stormed up in the teeth of the driving gale.

"Here he is! Here's that flyin' machine man, fell down on his job for fair! Way 'nough, Welshy!" Casco's booming voice went up. The big life Captain had seen the shipwrecked liner's people coming ashore, and had sighted the Katahdin, headed in; but he took the boat out as he had promised, this time daring death to find "that flyin' man that had wiped the eye of the whole Ships Bottom crew, by Jim!"

"You shore done your duty, Mate!" the Captain said in high glee, and the crew wagged solemn heads. "So be, you've tried the sky, an' you tried the sea; I reckon you're ready for dry land again, and the adulation o' the admirin' mob? Meaning Ships Bottom."

"Put me aboard the Katahdin first," Ford said. "We'll see after I tell the Commander where he'll find the Manila, that bullion ship, you know."

"You don't mean in the ram?" Casco cried, disappointed.

"In a diving suit," Ford said grimly. "Money gone, honor gone, all gone?" he murmured. "It's up to the Government!"

BUT Ford had reckoned better than he knew. He had double crossed the Government; but not as he first intended. Whether he deserved praise or censure was for the Life Saving Department to decide; but Ford did not regret. In the moment of launching the frail aeroplane into the darkness and gale, his old poise, the former steadiness of nerve that had carried him unscathed through his daring career in the air, had returned to him. Ford knew he had "come back," a feat achieved only by one man in ten thousand. And he bowed gratefully to the law of the beach.

NO OTHER WAY

Continued from page 12

the whole thing, hook and all, like the veriest gudgeon.

So his eyes dwelt fixedly on Clancy, and his frowning brow seemed to convey the thought, "It was you who contrived my present predicament, you little shrimp of a man! If I could wring your neck without fear of consequences, I should do it cheerfully."

And Clancy had shot back the retort, "You are feeling the lance now, my bold interloper: next time you will be impaled on it!"

Waverton suddenly abandoned the contest, and scribbled a note laboriously with his left hand, throwing it to Steingall, folded in such wise that it would carry across the table.

The chief of the bureau went through a pantomime of surprised inquiry, and, on being assured that the paper was really intended for him, opened it, and read:

No matter what the consequences to myself, I am exceedingly obliged to you personally for today's developments. Mrs. Waverton is now safe from molestation.

Steingall pursed his lips over this queer side issue; for it was passing strange that Claude Waverton should disregard his own dilemma, and pay heed only to the escape of his wife from further attentions on the part of Tearle.

Almost ostentatiously he gave the slip of paper to Clancy, who read it, and looked again at Waverton. This time he smiled, and his geniality appeared to astonish the other man considerably. But Waverton's mind was diverted from this new channel by the Coroner, who had completed his notes of Mrs. Kyrle's testimony, and now called: "Claude G. Waverton!"

"One could almost hear a pin drop in court," wrote the enthusiastic reporter. "It was noticed that Waverton moved wearily, and used his left hand to steady himself in ascending the few steps to the witness stand."

To be continued next Sunday

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By GORDON HOLMES

CHAPTER XV.

A Reshuffling of the Pack



YOU are Claude G. Waverton?" said the Coroner, squaring several sheets of legal-looking foolscap on his desk, and evidently settling down for another long spell of note-taking.

"I am," came the confident reply. "What address?"

"Saginaw, Lake Champlain, and East 64th-st., New York."

"You have heard the evidence of the previous witnesses. Do you contradict them in any important particulars?"

"No."

The Coroner permitted himself to look bewildered, and Waverton smiled.

"May I make a statement in my own words, Sir?" he asked. "It will facilitate matters greatly, and I shall, of course, be prepared to answer any questions subsequently."

"By all means," breathed the Coroner, glad to find that he was to be spared the necessity of pointing out how inconsistent was that emphatic "no" with the witness' firm disclaimer of the druggist's identification.

"It must be plain to you, Sir, and to every unbiased hearer," said Waverton, "that I have hardly recovered from a severe accident sustained at Palm Beach early in May. When I regained consciousness after having been thrown out of an automobile, I soon found that my memory had become very much impaired; and the defect remains, though it is gradually improving. I can recall certain incidents of the past; but my mind is a blank where others are concerned. I suppose that, at the time I am said to have gone to José Vuilmo's shop, I regarded the purchase of the poison as a trivial matter, and it evidently comes within the second category,—that of forgotten things, I mean. When I was charged today with a personal share in something that Mrs. Kyrle's legal adviser very properly called a 'conspiracy,' having for its apparent object the murder of a man I had never seen, I resented the imputation as monstrous. It was that notion which predominated in my denial of the poison transaction. I am well acquainted with José Vuilmo's store, and can describe its situation exactly; so it is quite probable, therefore, that I did execute Mrs. Kyrle's commission, though I certainly do not recollect it. I withdraw my earlier implied repudiation unreservedly, since Mrs. Kyrle's evidence has convinced me that I was mistaken."

The Coroner wrote every word; so there were frequent pauses in Waverton's statement. In ordinary conditions, the cautious official would have rejected some phases as being mere comment; but it was clear that he meant to allow the witness to express himself exactly as he thought fit on this occasion.

"Do you know anything whatever of Mr. Kyrle's death?" he asked, after glancing carefully through what he had written.

"Nothing, beyond the accounts in the newspapers."

"When did you first hear of it?"

"Last Sunday fortnight, at Providence. My valet showed it to me in the Sunday newspapers."

"Why?"

"He recognized the address. He was aware that Mrs. Delamar—both he and I have always known Mrs. Kyrle by that name—went occasionally to a cottage at Absecon called the Rosery. It was understood that the place was her own property; at least, such was my impression. I do not wish it to be assumed that I was misled in the matter by Mrs. Delamar."

"Did the lady ever mention her husband to you?"

"I cannot remember any instance."

"You took it for granted that she was a married woman?"

"She might have been a widow."

"But you did not trouble to inquire?"

"No. Why should I? If I gave any thought at all to the matter, I probably imagined that she had good reasons for not speaking of it, so held my tongue."

The Coroner seemed to regard this as excellent counsel, as he obviously repressed a desire to question the witness further. Nodding to Forbes, he said:

"Have you anything you wish to ask?"

"No, Sir," came the unexpected reply.

NOW, most people in court, including Waverton himself, fully anticipated a sharp passage at arms between the District Attorney and a witness whose connection with the inquiry, though remote, was none the less important. Even the Coroner was somewhat taken aback by the lawyer's sharp negative. He was evidently unprepared for it; indeed, he might well have looked for a very different answer, since, to a certain extent, he was in the confidence of the police, and knew that wider issues than the manner of Kyrle's death were involved in the inquiry. He was perplexed too by Waverton's pose as a heedless Lothario. He had encountered all sorts and conditions of men; but this stern, self-possessed man was far from fitting into the mental picture he had drawn of Curly Waverton.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Delamar had been given an opportunity to hold a whispered consultation with Traherne,

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and the latter was on his feet instantly when the flustered Coroner showed a disposition to close the witness' examination.

"With your permission, Sir," he said, "there is one point on which I would ask Mr. Waverton to be more precise, and that is as to the nature of the accident that affected his memory."

The Coroner indicated that the witness was at Traherne's disposal, and the latter, addressing Waverton, said:

"When did you first learn that your memory had become defective?"

"Do you mean what was the first instance of it?"

"Yes, put it that way if you like."

"I remember lying on a rock below the Boynton Road, and wondering why one hand should be in a swamp and the other clutching the roots of a guava tree; but I could not tell how I came to be in that somewhat unusual position."

At this point Clancy began to take notes, the first he had troubled to make during the day's proceedings.

"That instance comes somewhat too near the actual time of the mishap to be of much guidance," said Traherne. "I want you, if possible, Mr. Waverton, to tell us the first instance after you were fully restored to consciousness, when you failed to recall some well marked event in your previous life that undoubtedly had happened."

"You are asking me to perform a very difficult feat."

"But why?"

"You want me to remember something that I tell you I have completely forgotten."

A low chuckle of laughter ran through the court; but Traherne only joined in it, and stuck to his guns.

"Let me put it differently," he said. "José Vuilmo says that someone giving the name of Claude G. Waverton bought crystals of nicotine at his establishment, and you say now, after first denying the truth of his statement in its reference to yourself, that you may really have done this thing, but have no recollection of it. Surely this cannot be the first time such lack of memory as to a fact, or an alleged fact, has been brought to your notice?"

"By no means. It occurs every day. May I go into this matter somewhat more fully? I have noticed that my memory is not affected in its accuracy as regards scenes, places, and historical events, either personal or general. When I returned to my country place, after an absence of nearly a year, I remembered the position of certain shrubs, pictures, pieces of statuary, which had been removed during my absence; but I was often at a loss for the name and identity of an indoor servant, or of some person employed on the estate. I knew an old dog, and the dog, I am glad to say, knew me; but I could not properly associate the levers and brakes of an automobile with their functions, though, prior to the accident, I was a skilled driver. I remembered all about certain proceedings instituted by my wife; but failed to look upon the incidents that led up to them in the same light as before I got the knock on the head. To cite a purely personal phase, I used to indulge freely in stimulants: now I rarely touch any intoxicating liquor other than a glass of claret for dinner. Shall I go on?"

"Pray do."

"Well, I have consulted various specialists, both in Palm Beach and New York, and they tell me that one of two things has happened,—there is either a clot of



"Don't Say too Much to the Lawyer," He Said.

blood resting on some nerves in the central ganglia of the brain, or I have sustained a slight indentation of the skull in that locality. They advise me against an operation unless the symptoms show increased gravity; whereas I find that they are slowly disappearing."

Mrs. Delamar whispered something when Waverton was speaking, and presumably her communication accounted for the lawyer's next question:

"Did you fail to remember the name of your valet, Rice, when you were taken to Asphodel House after the accident?"

"I really cannot tell you," said Waverton coolly.

"Is that incident already buried in oblivion?"

"It is, if it happened; though I should be slow to believe that I had forgotten Rice's existence, for never was there a more faithful and devoted servant and friend than Rice has been to me."

Traherne looked puzzled, as well he might be, and seemingly disregarded a second suggestion made by Mrs. Delamar. "What doctors have you consulted, Mr. Waverton?" he inquired.

The witness gave the names of three eminent surgeons, and Traherne sat down. Mrs. Delamar was anxious to discuss matters with him at once; but he was emphatic in his refusal to attend then to anything beyond the exigencies of the moment, because a discussion straightway arose between Coroner and police as to procedure. Forbes favored an adjournment for another fortnight; but the Coroner could not see any valid reason for that course, unless the authorities felt sure of producing further evidence of an important nature.

Forbes could not give a positive undertaking on that score, and Traherne pressed for an immediate verdict of suicide.

It soon became clear, however, that the Coroner was opposed to any verdict that positively committed him to a precise finding, and the verdict ultimately took an unprejudiced shape,—that the deceased died from the ef-



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fect of poison; but whether by his own act or by the act of some other person or persons there is not sufficient evidence to determine."

This was what is known as an "open" verdict. In other words, it relieved the court from frequent and perhaps useless adjournments; while it left the authorities free to pursue their investigations, and take any subsequent steps they might deem necessary by proceedings before a magistrate.

THOUGH Mrs. Delamar might well lay to heart the philosophy underlying the proverb, "Never halloo till you are out of the woods," she had some reason to be satisfied with the turn of events. Notwithstanding the disastrous blow struck at her fellow plotter's matrimonial scheme where Doris Waverton was concerned, she personally had almost escaped from a very serious dilemma. It was quite obvious that had she deviated by a hair's breadth from the facts known to the police there was in waiting a whole host of evidence to disprove her statements. In that case, not only would the inquiry have been adjourned, but there was no small probability that instead of driving off to apartments in a comfortable hotel she might now be an inmate of a cell in the police station house.

It was a curiously disquieting thought, and any woman might be pardoned if she dwelt on it to the exclusion of all else. But Mrs. Delamar swept it aside with the first breath of fresh air after she had signed her deposition, had fixed an hour for Traherne to call, and was free to get away from the vitiated atmosphere of the court. In very truth, her soul was wrapped up in a discovery that was almost stupefying. The Claude Waverton who gave testimony at the inquest was not the Claude Waverton she had wheedled from allegiance to his wife and child! It was not a mere matter of differences in voice, gestures, face, and manner that perplexed Mrs. Delamar. She had encountered a man whose character differed from that of the Claude Waverton she knew as dawn differs from dusk; and Mrs. Delamar was a shrewd judge of character.

She was quite certain that she could never have drawn this later Claude Waverton into her toils, and for that very reason she would never have tried to achieve the impossible task. It was inconceivable that a rap on the head could convert a profligate into a man of fine instincts, a roué into a quiet-mannered gentleman, a brainless sot into an individuality of such strength that it dominated men like the District Attorney, the Coroner, and those preternaturally alert and sharp-eyed detectives.

Granted even that these marvels might be accomplished, they did not account for the undoubted fact that Claude Waverton, the gambler and drunkard, spoke Spanish so badly that he was barely able to stammer through an order to a peon or a transaction in a store; whereas his double was thoroughly proficient in the language. Moreover, he himself was aware of this distinction between the linguistic attainments of the one man and the other, and instantly she asked with growing amazement why he had dared to emphasize it in public.

Who was he, then? How had he attained such close knowledge of Waverton's history and associates as to step coolly into his shoes? Was he the man supposed to have been killed on the Boynton Road? Was it possible that she could have been mistaken in his identity? She saw now that this astonishing thing was possible. He had been carried to her house a limp and pallid form, his face disfigured and his hair matted with congealed blood. Strange doctors and nurses had taken charge of him, and when she was first admitted to the room his head was swathed in bandages and his hair had been cropped closely to permit of the scalp wounds being dressed efficiently. Moreover, how like he was to the real Claude Waverton!

MRS. DELAMAR'S next thought was worthy of a woman who had contrived to live on her wits during the last few years. If the present Claude Waverton was an impostor, how could she best turn the discovery to her own advantage? And did she share the secret with any other person? Was there not a good deal of veiled innuendo in the curiously hostile attitude adopted by the District Attorney? And why had New York interfered in a New Jersey inquiry? She, in common with most people in court, had wondered why Forbes had no questions to put to Waverton; but, on the supposition that the authorities were on the same track as herself, it was easy to see that they were holding their hands now only in order to strike with irresistible force later. What they did not know they guessed, and they were waiting until supposition became certainty before they acted.

Then the notion came that she, as an ally, would be of immense value to a man in Waverton's place if called on to fight for the retention of name and estate. She smiled a little at that conception of a new role. Every adventuress must occasionally be candid with herself, whether she is consulting a mirror or her conscience, and Mrs. Delamar frankly admitted that she had grown rather afraid of Waverton since the day in Palm Beach when he was able to leave his room and calmly announce his intentions,—that he meant to go forthwith to a hotel, and that she must regard the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars won at Schwartz's gambling house as his farewell token of esteem.

True, she had tried to persuade herself that she would win him back as soon as his health was restored, and she encouraged Tearle's ambitions with regard to Doris Waverton as supplying a final cause of estrangement between husband and wife. But there ever had peeped up in her mind a lurking fear lest her plans might miscarry because of some new and unforeseen development in Waverton himself. Now she had learned the unsuspected genesis of her doubt. Never again would she distrust her intuition! It almost amused her to conjure up the form and manner of the next meeting between Waverton and herself; for she meant to drive a hard bargain,—nothing less than marriage would satisfy her: the price of her silence, or, if needful, of her support, would be a wedding ring.

It was, perhaps, the strangest feature in a strange case that two women, one a charming and modest woman to her fingertips, the other a true daughter of the horse leech, who had willingly bartered her reputation for the doubtful gifts of fashion, should perceive and be swayed by the finer qualities of heart and brain displayed by the present holder of the name of Waverton as compared with his predecessor.

If Mrs. Delamar's suspicions were well founded, she hardly knew the man at all, and had not spoken to him on more than three occasions in her life; yet now she was weighing the chances that would make her legally his wife, insure for her the recognized position she coveted, and confirm for all time an audacious and almost unprecedented fraud.

AS a commencement, she tried to throw over that largely built person, John Stratton Tearle.

"The game is up, Jack," she said when the door of a private sitting room had closed on them in the hotel; for Tearle had traveled to Atlantic City by the night mail, but had judged it prudent to keep away from the inquest when Mrs. Delamar told him of the mischance that led to a couple of detectives witnessing their leavetaking at New York.

"Whose game, or what game?" he demanded crossly; for he too had been weighing possibilities during some care-laden hours.

"Yours, of course—and mine as well," Mrs. Delamar added hurriedly, since there was no sense in converting a friend into an enemy by hinting that their interests were not jointly endangered.

"What has happened, Feena? Come to the point in plain English. You and I can afford to talk to each other in that way, you know."

There was an ugly glint in her ally's eyes which warned her that some display of tact was advisable.

"I cannot fight against the Detective Bureau," she said sadly, and with due pretense of calm despair. "Those wretched men have ferreted out everything. We thought this morning that our mistake lay in being seen together in New York; but that is a mere trifle compared with the reality. They put me on the witness stand, and made me tell everything. Luckily, I was wise enough to see that the position was desperate, and called for transparent honesty and truthfulness. Oh, Jack, if I had tried to humbug the horrid lawyer who was sent here by the bureau to conduct the case for the police, I do believe they would have arrested me!"

"On what charge?"

"They actually seemed to suspect me of poisoning Herbert!"

"Oh, did they?"

"Yes. But don't you be beastly too, and speak in that unsympathetic way; for my nerves are all on edge, and I shall scream in a minute."

"I don't see what good screaming will do. Am I to understand that you are identified as Josephine Delamar?"

"Worse, far worse! They made me tell about you."

"What about me?"

"That you and I are friends of long standing; that we write to each other constantly; that I wrote to you at Narragansett Pier."

Tearle sprang up from his chair into which his bulk had subsided. His red face was blazing with wrath, and his long upper lip was raised like a snarling dog's. "What in Hades had my friendship and letters and whereabouts to do with an inquiry into Kyrle's death?" he demanded fiercely.

"Don't be vulgar, Jack. Herbert poisoned himself, it seems. And I had innocently obtained crystals of nicotine for him from a drugstore at Palm Beach—long ago. They brought the man there, and he proved it. Don't glare at me in that fashion. If you can't behave yourself, go away—you will find a very full report in the newspapers, I am sure. Before you go, kindly ring for a waiter. I want a cup of tea."

He rang, ordered the tea and a highball, and managed to smile so pleasantly that Mrs. Delamar was secretly afraid, and longed to be rid of him.

"You must not excite my curiosity and then tell me to run away and buy a newspaper, Feena," he said, ominously calm; for he was one whose habit lay rather with splutterings of rage when angered. "Even the newspaper cannot vie with you in accuracy, and, what is vastly more important, in clearness of explanation. Thus far your story has been incoherent. Now gather your wits and tell me about it."

Mrs. Delamar scented danger as a horse will scent a lion from afar. If Tearle was to be got rid of, she must use all her arts and hoodwink him thoroughly. To begin, there must be no apparent concealment. So she sipped her tea, and went through the proceedings at the inquest with absolute accuracy; though she said not a syllable anent the substitution of one man for the other as Claude Waverton.

Tearle listened in silence. She had reached the end, and was waiting for some expression of his opinion, when Traherne was announced.

"This is the lawyer you instructed, isn't it?" said her companion, rising.

"Yes. I asked him to come and discuss matters with me; but I really don't want him. He can do nothing."

"Never mind. Let him look after your interests locally. Don't you see, Feena, how jolly awkward it would be for you if anyone told the police that you watched Herbert starting away in the cutter, and drinking the decoction you bought for him in drugstores at Trenton and other places?"

A frail china teacup fell to the floor from Mrs. Delamar's hand, and was shattered; but Tearle affected a callous indifference to the woman's blanched face and staring eyes. As for her voice, it failed her completely at this crisis.

"I'll meet you at dinner," he said carelessly over his shoulder. "Don't say too much to the lawyer, and when we have dined you and I will have a long chat. The situation demands it." And with that he was gone.

HOW Clancy would have gloated over "the man with the telescope" had he been privileged to overhear the conversation between this precious pair!

Not that his inability to be omniscient and omnipresent really mattered a great deal; for he and Steingall were closeted with Forbes at this moment, and the talk was of the same topic—with a difference.

"I really believe Kyrle committed suicide; but hoped that circumstantial evidence would hang his wife," said Steingall, announcing his views with the directness that was his well marked characteristic when a case had reached its crucial stage.

"I never thought otherwise," chirped Clancy.

"No, you didn't. In fact, we agreed with each other in principle; but differed as to detail."

"And you may both be wrong," said Forbes sourly; for he was not pleased by the way the inquiry had gone.

"You really don't think that, Mr. Forbes," said Steingall, smiling. "If I might pry into the legal mind, I should hazard a guess that, while you speak of Mrs. Delamar with your lips, in your heart, or brain, or wherever one feels most deeply, you are longing to get equal with the present Claude G. Waverton."

"The easiest thing!" purred Clancy.

"Don't talk nonsense!" snapped Forbes.

"I don't believe there is a man living who could force that fellow to incriminate himself. Did you ever hear a cooler change of tune than he carried through today? And, mark you, he convinced the court! Test him with any given incident, and says he, 'That is one of the things I have forgotten.' And he can bring twenty doctors to prove that his defect is not only genuine, but has a long and serious Greek name. An easy thing, indeed! Anyone who wants this case can have it where I am concerned!"

Steingall offered Forbes a cigar, which was

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courtly declined, whereupon he nipped the
end off it for himself; but Clancy only snig-
gered again, because he knew that he was
irritating a hard-headed American Scot.

"I don't blame you for losing heart, Mr.
Forbes," he said. "You lawyers invariably
go by the statute made and provided, and if
you cannot fit your facts into a clause you
find fault with the facts, never with the
clause. Now, I don't often prophesy, as
Steingall here will tell you, nor am I a betting
man; but I predict now that within a week
from this day Claude Waverton will either
confess that he is Charles Scott, or bolt. If
you disagree with me, I'll bet a new hat on
it, and you yourself shall judge whether I
have won or lost."

"What sort of hat?" inquired Forbes.

"Oh, as the weather is hot, shall we say a
twenty-dollar Panama?" and Clancy man-
aged to wink at Steingall unseen by the other.

"Man, are you crazy to talk about giving
twenty dollars for a hat? Anyhow, I'll go
you my twenty to yours, hard cash."

"The winner to stand a dinner," put in
Steingall.

Forbes considered the point. He regarded
the money as being as nearly his as was
possible in regard to a bet, and he could
afford to be generous with a little detective's
superfluous wealth. "Done!" said he.

"Look here!" cried Steingall. "I want to
be in this. Suppose our worthy friend makes
out that he really is Claude Waverton, and
convinces Forbes himself that he is telling
the truth, who wins?"

"I do," claimed Forbes.

"Hardly. Both you and Clancy agree
that he is a fraud. The point at variance
between you is simply this,—within a week,
will he own up or vanish?"

"Tell you what," said Clancy. "If he
proves himself to be Claude Waverton, the
bet is off, and you will stand the dinner!"

The three dined together many days later;
but time alone could determine which would
pay, and why.

CHAPTER XVI. The Only Way

WAVERTON and his inseparable com-
panion, Rice, returned to Lake Cham-
plain on Thursday evening, and both master
and man sighed contentedly when each was
installed in his own quarters. Rice had read
the newspapers in the train; thus gathering
almost as much information as if he had at-
tended the inquest. Indeed, he was better
able to weigh and analyze the evidence,
since the New York papers had printed
every word of it, and he had underlined a
good many sentences with a pencil.

His sallow face flushed when he read the
passage wherein Waverton had described
him as a "faithful and devoted servant and
friend," and his eye often traveled back to
that particular paragraph, even while he was
pondering the curious argument between
his master and the District Attorney, or the
question that led up to the encomium on
himself.

"Failed to remember my name when they
brought him to Asphodel House—now, I
wonder who said that?" mused Rice, and
when, as he fully expected, Waverton dis-
cussed the inquest with him on the morning
after their return, he reverted to that some-
what significant statement.

"What did Mr. Traherne mean by it,
Sir?" he asked. "Who could have put him
up to tell such a downright lie? You knew
me well enough when I kem in—and that
was the very first minute I could get past
Mrs. Delamar. 'Hello, Rice!' says you,
faintlike, but with a pleasant sort of smile
that fair choked me up, it did. 'Good
morning, Mr. Claude,' says I. 'I hope you
are feeling better this morning.' And 'Right
as rain,' says you. Not know me, indeed! I
wish I'd been in court when they told that
whopper!"

"Don't blame the lawyer, Rice," said
Waverton. "The question was suggested
by Mrs. Delamar. Possibly it was based
on some silly thing I said while my wits were
wool gathering."

"If you had a lawyer there, Sir, an' I'd
happened to be sittin' near him, I'd have
whispered a thing or two in his ear when
Mrs. Delamar was in the box. If luck had
gone ag'in' you, Mr. Claude, an' you had
died in Asphodel House, nobody would ever
have set eyes again on the twenty-five thou-
sand dollars you pulled in at Schwartz's
place that night. Mrs. Delamar had your
pocketbook stowed away, all right! I know
that!"

"She was only displaying what is called
an intelligent anticipation of future events,
Rice," laughed his master, who, oddly
enough, had laid a newspaper on the break-
fast table folded in such a way that it was
obvious he had been reading an article on
"The Future of the Argentine as a Producer
of Rubber."

"Ah, she's a deep one!" said the valet.
"She would never have spoken up as she did



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some business in the little town, and strode up the road attired in a glistening mackintosh, leggings, and cap, a costume that altered his appearance so completely that no one would ever guess he was a valet unless they were told.

Feeling that a glass of beer would keep the damp out of his system, he entered the hotel, and incidentally learned of the Frenchman's presence.

"Why, he was here a minute ago," said the proprietor. "I'd have liked you to meet him, Mr. Rice—he's a warrior, is Monseer Brun."

Rice, by reason of his travels, was an authority on the French nation. As a whole, one gathered, he did not think much of it; though there were exceptions, as everyone knew.

He finished his beer, and trudged forth refreshed. It would have been interesting to have learned his views if someone had told him that Clancy, of the New York Detective Bureau, had passed swiftly out of the bar the moment before he entered it.

THAT evening the young woman who attended to telegrams at Saginaw was somewhat puzzled by the text of a message handed in by the valued guest of the local hotel. The address was a word registered in New York; but the remainder was curiously simple, yet unmeaning, for it read:

The missing word was *navaja*.

She bent her brows in vain over the enigma, and might have been gratified had she known that Inspector Steingall, enthroned in his Center-st. sanctum, was compelled to smoke the best part of a cigar before he remembered that Claude Waverton had hesitated, and finally balked altogether, over explaining the craft that enabled him to bring down the gallant looking Tearle so neatly that day on the promenade at Narragansett Pier. It was the only "navaja" word he could think of in connection with the Waverton case, and even now "navaja" sounded more like one of Clancy's far-fetched jokes than a sober explanation of fact.

Once, however, Steingall had succeeded in locating the incident to which his colleague's telegram referred, his active brain could not dismiss it. He expected a letter from Clancy on Sunday, and was sure that the Little Fellow had despatched the telegram as an *avant courier* merely to perplex the Big Fellow. The letter now in the post would explain everything. Meanwhile, Steingall could not put that curious word out of his mind, and in the long run this is the line of reasoning he adopted:

Tirar le navaja, or "knife throwing," is peculiarly a Mexican custom; a peculiarly unpleasant one too, since an adept in the art can kill a man by this means at many yards' distance. The feat demands the nicest accuracy of hand and eye. If Waverton had acquired the requisite skill, he must have lived in Mexico; so Clancy had evidently ferreted out particulars of the man's earlier life. Oddly enough, on Steingall's desk at that moment lay a letter from John Stratton Tearle, in which the writer informed the chief of the bureau that "owing to certain facts that have come to my knowledge recently," he would probably be able within the next few days to give some startling information "as to the past history of the person who claims to be Claude G. Waverton."

Charles Scott had been in the Argentine six years, and Tearle had come back from Arizona, near the Mexican line, about the time Scott first entered Santander's service.

"Poor devil!" mused Steingall. "The net is closing round him, and I'm dashed if I don't feel sorry for him. He looks and acts like a white man, all the time, and I believe that vindictive little imp Clancy has the same opinion of him. Personally, I shall not be a bit surprised if he doesn't let him slip through his fingers at the eleventh hour."

Whereupon Steingall amused himself by writing a brief analysis of Clancy's telegram, and posting it to Monsieur Brun, at Saginaw, just to prove that one head might be as good as another occasionally.

Clancy chuckled when he read his chief's display of deductive reasoning.

"Pure side!" he muttered. "He wants to show off a bit, now that he is acquiring my method. Still, I wish he was here. How he would enjoy my masterpiece of stage management tomorrow afternoon!"

EARLY on Monday, Monsieur Brun received a telegram from New York which had been handed in at Madison Square the previous evening. It read:

Have despatched code message. Answer may be delayed owing to difference in time.

The prospect of delay did not seem to affect the Frenchman's appetite. He ate a

heartily breakfast and lounged about,—for the rain had disappeared, and Saginaw was bathed in sunshine,—and generally wore the aspect of a man who was killing time and liked the task.

About ten o'clock he strolled toward the Waverton place, using a woodland path that gave a short cut over a hill avoided by the road. From the top of the hill he could survey nearly the whole of the park, with its lawns and woods sloping down to Lake Champlain, and, sitting on a tree stump, he watched a high-powered motor-car speeding along the drive.

Claude Waverton was at the steering wheel. Armand was by his side.

"Now," thought Clancy, "if I was in the tonneau, and leaning over the back of their seat, there would be so much French flying about that one might fancy oneself in Lower Canada."

A hooded victoria crawling along the road caught his eye. It halted at the lodge gates, and, after a brief colloquy between its occupant and the gatekeeper's wife, passed in and headed straight for the house, while the woman stood and gazed after it curiously.

"Now, who in the world is that?" demanded Clancy, almost with anxiety. "Mrs. Waverton is not due here till four o'clock. Surely, it cannot be Mrs. Delamar! Perhaps it isn't a woman at all. I'll find out from the driver after he has deposited his fare."

He hurried down to the road, and waited nearly twenty minutes before the victoria rumbled back toward Saginaw.

"Hi! Are you passing O'Hara's?" cried Clancy. "O'Hara's" was the name of the hotel.

"Yes, Sir, jump in," said the driver; for by this time everyone in Saginaw had seen or heard of Monsieur Brun.

"No, no, I jump up—so," and Clancy was on the box. Within a minute he had ascertained that the vehicle had brought from the railway station no less a person than Mrs. Waverton, "an' the poor thing divorced, sir all!" grinned the man.

"Is she?" grinned Clancy, his face creased with merriment, while his very soul writhed within him; for he felt that this unexpectedly early visit presaged developments that he could not control.

"One would ha' thought he'd seen enough of that husband of hers, she was that anxious to be rid of him. But she isn't goin' to stay here. I have to call for her in an hour, and bring her back to O'Hara's."

"Ah, dat excellent O'Hara! Den I shall zee de lady," said Clancy.

"Most likely, Sir."

It was, indeed, more than likely. Clancy was very angry with Doris Waverton. She was on the boards at least five hours too soon, and such a contretemps would annoy the most phlegmatic of dramatists, let alone a mercurial playwright like a detective.

IN very truth, her arrival at The Dene had wrought something akin to consternation. When she alighted from the victoria, and waited for a few seconds to consult her watch and speak to the driver, a distressed footman had hastily summoned Rice, who was regarded by the household as Waverton's deputy in matters that could not be decided without instructions.

So the valet was just in time to hurry forward and greet his mistress as she entered the hall. He noticed that she was dressed in black, and was instantly aware of a composure of manner and perceptible stiffening of demeanor toward himself that were markedly absent during their last meeting. In fact, Doris was now convinced that Rice was a party to the fraud carried out by his employer, and the belief had weakened her faith in human nature.

"Is Mr. Waverton at home?" she demanded coldly, and Rice fancied she placed a sarcastic emphasis on the name.

"He is motoring about the grounds, Ma'am," said Rice.

"Kindly send for him, or go yourself, and tell him he must come at once. I shall wait for him in the library."

Without vouchsafing another word of explanation, she crossed the hall. Her glance fell on her own portrait, smiling from the landing, and, by a curious chance, the first object her eyes found in the library was a photograph of herself, placed on a writing table near a window.

She examined it critically, almost scornfully. "What a poser the man is!" she thought. "I suppose he imagines now that the role of regretful husband is a good one to adopt."

Nevertheless, her smooth brow was ruffled by discovering the portrait on a table that was obviously in regular use by the wretch who had usurped the name and place of Claude Waverton. Moreover, her recollection of him—be it remembered she had seen him only once by night, and in the



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stress of a deep emotion; for the casual glimpse obtained at Narragansett Pier hardly counted—did not quite accord with her present theory.

Her thoughts flew back to that remarkable meeting, and her pale face crimsoned for a moment as she recalled the loverlike way in which her "husband" had carried her in his arms. Oh, the incredible impertinence of the man! She almost wished she had not yielded to impulse, and had obeyed the behests of that imperious little detective, who had impressed on her the great importance of not presenting herself before half-past three or four o'clock in the afternoon; whereas the hour was now little after ten in the morning.

To be concluded next Sunday

THERE AND BACK WITH LUCILE

Continued from page 9

I believe, was as official assassin for his Late Lamented Majesty."

"Assassin!" gasps Mrs. Smiley.

"The Koreans, before their country was Russianized, had some queer customs," explains the Doc, watchin' Lucile close. "The post of royal assassin was more or less honorable; but the incumbent was apt to be kept very busy. Yamenoki tells me that at times he was sadly overworked. That was not his reason for resigning, however. One day he made a trifling mistake, and instead of despatching an enemy of the throne he bisected the skull of a royal nephew. He was running for his life when he stumbled aboard my cruising junk, which was tied up to the wharf at Lao-tse-sung, and to avoid further difficulty I put to sea at once. I've no doubt I could still collect a reward of several thousand yen if I were to take him back there."

"But—but an assassin!" says Mrs. Smiley, whisperin' it out hoarse. "Newton, how can you sleep with him in the same house?"

"Oh, Yamenoki's all right," says the Doc carelessly like; "that is, if he doesn't take a violent dislike to anyone. If he should—well, I might be able to control him. May I help you to some of the wild rice? Ah, here is Yamenoki with the curry!"

Lucile didn't seem to enjoy that dinner so much, especially after she'd caught the big Chink tastin' some of the rice before he passed the plate to her.

"Why does he do that?" she demands.

"Another Korean custom," says the Doc. "He merely wishes to show you that he has not put poison in it."

"Poison!" echoes Mrs. Smiley. And after that every minute the big Chink was in the room she follows him with her eyes. When he disappears into the kitchen she sighs relieved. And, while Sadie and I samples most of the dishes, and joshes with the Doc about 'em, Lucile says never a word; but sits there shudderin' and thinkin' hard. When the dinner is over she's the first one to make a break through the door, and the next thing we know she's pinnin' on that fancy lid.

"Newton," says she, "I've changed my plans. I am going now, and when you have got rid of that bloodthirsty villain you may send me word." And out she sails.

NEXT mornin' as I goes past the Smiley place I drops in for a minute, and finds the Doc and Yamenoki busy packin' bags and gettin' out the wooden window shutters.

"You ain't startin' off on another trip so soon, are you, Doc?" says I.

"Why, yes," says he. "We sail day after tomorrow. You see, the Imperial Museum in Berlin has lost its most valuable reptile—the bushmaster, deadliest of all venomous snakes, and very difficult to capture alive. I am going to run down to British Guiana and box up a couple."

"Gee!" says I. "Ain't you runnin' some risks?"

"Y-e-e-e-es," says he, glancin' nervous over his shoulder, "I suppose I am; but we're catching the first steamer."

"Oh, I see!" says I. "Lucile, eh? If she should show up later, got any message to leave?"

"You might say," says he, "that I have engaged Yamenoki for life."

Course, Sadie and me has to have our chuckle over that across the dinner table that night; but hers ends in a sigh. "I do hope," says she, "that I shall never be a fat old woman."

"Worse could happen you," says I. "Don't we know lots of heavy old girls that's as nice as they are weighty? It ain't the pounds that count: it's the disposition."

"In that case," says Sadie, "I believe I shall try a little of that steamed pudding."



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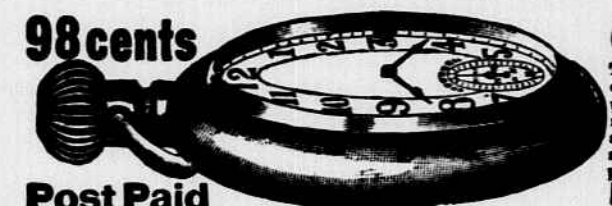
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NO OTHER WAY

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CHAPTER XVI. (Continued) The Only Way



DORIS had not long to wait. Rice intercepted the car at some point near the house, and told Waverton that his wife was in the library, and wished to see him instantly.

A curious grayness appeared beneath the tan on Waverton's face as he listened; but he merely nodded, touched the switch, and the car sped off again, this time in the direction of the house. He stopped short of the main entrance, and evidently intended to cross the lawn.

"Fill up the tanks, Armand," he said, "and put some rugs and coats inside. We may go for a long run this afternoon; indeed, it is possible we may be away for the night."

Then he walked slowly to the drawing room, which he entered through an open window, passed from there to the hall, muttered an order to a servant to tell Rice, when he came in, to pack a motoring valise for a journey and strap it on the car, and so reached the library door.

He did not hesitate, but turned the handle of the door quietly. As quietly he closed the door behind him, and, after glancing at Doris, peered round the room to see if she was alone. She was sitting with her back to the window, and looked at him with strange intentness as he drew near; but she did not rise, and for a moment there was strained silence. Then Waverton, who seemed to be really the more self-possessed of the two, halted in front of the table on which stood the photograph. It might have been chance, but he could not have chosen any other position where he would be less exposed to a brilliant light, and he smiled slightly as he met the woman's searching, indignant, and somewhat amazed scrutiny.

"I have been told that you had sent for me," he said. "May I ask to what is due the honor of this visit?"

The astounding impudence of the man was helpful. It served to strengthen a resolution that, never very pronounced, was rapidly weakening under the subtle influence of environment; so Doris pulled herself together and tackled a disagreeable duty.

"I have no wish to enter into a discussion with you," she said; "so I shall state my purpose in the fewest and plainest words. The police are aware of your identity, Mr. Charles Scott. They have known it for sometime, and have held back from active measures only in order to secure undeniable proof of the audacious imposture you have carried through so successfully. They sought my cooperation; but, for some reason, wished me to remain inactive till this afternoon. On consideration, however, I came to the conclusion that, no matter how cruel the fraud you had practised on me, there remained the undoubted fact that you saved my child from death; so I am here to warn you that you will be arrested before sunset. I don't see that any good purpose will be served if you are sentenced to a long term in prison, and I hope, therefore, that you will profit by the chance I am giving you, and escape to some distant country, if it be possible. I think too that Rice ought to go away. I don't understand much about these things; but I fear he has rendered himself liable to punishment by helping you to impersonate my husband; and, in any event, he cannot remain here, as I mean to return this evening, and take formal possession of the house and its contents on behalf of my daughter. If you have any sense of honesty, you will sit down instantly and write a full confession of your crime, and give it to me. In return, I promise to do what I can to throw the authorities off your track, or at least to minimize their efforts to arrest you. They will probably be very angry with me; but I cannot help it. For my little Kathleen's sake, I want to show you some clemency."

Doris had framed this speech carefully. It contained not a word that she did not believe to be true, and she fully expected to see the counterfeit Claude Waverton wilt and cower under its outspoken denunciation. Yet he did nothing of the kind; and, though his brazenness passed all belief, she felt some portion of her valor yielding, and she ended far less confidently than she began.

"Let me understand you clearly, Mrs. Waverton," said the man, and her eyes dropped under the directness, almost the fervor, of his gaze. "You regard me as a scoundrel; but you wish to save me from just rigor of the law?"

Clearly he waited for an answer; so Doris forced herself to say, "Yes."

"Well, you will be glad you said that when you learn the truth about me. You are the one person on earth to whom I would open my lips as to the past; but I know that I can trust you, and I regret now that I have not taken you into my confidence sooner."

Doris was beginning to feel a vague alarm at the unexpected way in which her self-willed maneuver was developing, and some tardy recognition of advice dinned into her ears by Clancy came to her aid. "Please, Mr. Scott," she said, "I think you ought to write anything you have to say, or, if you really cannot write, let me summon some independent witness, the butler, for instance."

WAVERTON laughed pleasantly. "I am quite sure that the presence of the butler, or any other domestic, would be profoundly irksome to you before I had uttered twenty words," he said. "Now, you have set me a good example, which I mean to emulate. My name is not Charles Scott. I am Claude Waverton, your husband's cousin, and to a certain extent his heir. I have robbed nobody of a penny, nor injured anyone in any tangible way. A good deal of the money he squandered was mine beyond question, and such part of the estate as should have gone with it represents an annual income that is a good deal more than the sum I have reserved for my own use after paying your alimony. I may never marry,—certainly not without your sanction,—so your daughter will succeed to the whole property at my death; and, in the not altogether impossible event of my continued existence at the time of her marriage, I should take care that her settlements were satisfactory. I am telling you the literal truth, Mrs. Waverton. I am really and truly Claude Waverton; my namesake and cousin, who was also the son of my father's brother and partner, having crushed his head to a pulp in the moment when he nearly killed me—though, of course, by accident.

"It was that selfsame accident which befriended me. It gave me another chance in life, and I took it. If I came back into the world as Claude Waverton, I was able to return to my native country, to hear my own language spoken once more, to move among my fellow men with confidence, to experience again, for a few brief years, the joy of life. These things were harshly denied to me in my own personality. If I reappeared as the Claude Waverton who was supposed to have been drowned off the South American coast six years ago, I had but one gray road to follow,—that which leads to a convict's cell.

"For I am an escaped convict, Mrs. Waverton. I was arrested in Mexico on a charge of murder, unjustly convicted,—though I could not prove my innocence, because a man who could have saved me swore to a falsehood,—and sentenced to be strangled. Owing to my nationality, added to a belief that the native usurer whom I was supposed to have shot had driven me to commit the crime by his threats of exposure if I did not pay my debts, the sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life. I resolved to die rather than pass the rest of my days in a Mexican prison; so, at the risk of my life, I escaped, boarded a British merchant steamer by night, and was the only man thrown ashore when she was wrecked in the bleakest part of Paraguay. Some poor natives nursed me back to health, and by degrees I worked my way partly toward civilization. Thus I became Charles Scott, tutor to Don Miguel Santander's family, and Fate decided that when your husband was killed I should be the only man who shared in the accident.

"I was badly hurt; but retained sufficient strength and consciousness to crawl to his assistance. Then I saw that he was dead. But I saw more, I saw what I thought might prove my own salvation; for I recognized him, and letters and other documents in his pockets placed his identity beyond dispute, while the similarity of our ages and a marked resemblance between us as boys made substitution possible. So, wounded and stricken though I was, I stripped myself, and stripped him,—exchanged every article of attire,—and just had strength enough to crawl down among the rocks, where I was found before I lost my senses for the best part of an hour.

"The rest of the story I can tell you at some other time, if you will permit me, since there is no reason why you and I should not become good friends in the future; provided always that you do not carry out your threat, and send me back to that long term of penal servitude you spoke of a little while ago. No one can harm me if I have your support. I only ask you to do a little wrong in order to achieve a great right. Your husband's father swindled my father. I can prove that to your satisfaction, or before any court of law in the land; but my tongue is tied by my Mexican sentence. So, which is it to be,—a few years of peace for me, or the chains of a felon?"

HE had long since ceased to embarrass his hearer by looking at her. Seeing that she was almost fit to collapse with excitement, he turned away resolutely and gazed out over the park. His utterance was clear and decisive, and he condensed an extraordinary narrative



of suffering, danger, and hardship into a few straightforward, careless sentences which bore the impress of truth in every syllable, even though they might be far too confident. Her heart was fluttering in the maddest way. What did he mean by talking about obtaining her sanction if he wanted to get married, and hinting at "friendship" between them? Why, such a notion was crazy—yet he seemed to regard it as a reasonable thing! She could scarcely think. There was a singing in her ears. She wanted to cover her face with her hands; for she dared not meet his eyes.

When Waverton stopped speaking he waited a long while—many minutes, it seemed to Doris; though in reality it could not have been more than a few seconds—before he faced her again.

"Well," he said, smiling wistfully, "what are you going to do about it? The whole business is under your control now, Mrs. Waverton. You say you are grateful to me for having saved your child's life. Well, it goes against the grain to claim that as an asset in my favor; but it ought to weigh a little bit against the annoyance of being regarded as my divorced wife during the next few months. I beg your pardon—I mean, of course, the annoyance of having me figure as your divorced husband during that period. And you are free—free to marry whom you choose; though not free, thank God! to marry John Stratton Tearle, the man who swore my life away in Mexico, because he hated me as one who was aware of his discreditable transactions among the Indians in Arizona. Perhaps you do not know it, but that is one other item in my claim for gratitude. No matter what the risk to myself, I was determined to stop his pursuit of you. And I fancy I succeeded, since I know you well enough already to be sure that you could never again care to be seen speaking to a man who was admittedly the friend and confidant of a degraded woman like—"

There was a discreet knock at the door.

"COME in," said Waverton, after a sharp glance at Doris to make sure that she was not so distressed in manner as to invite notice.

"If you please, Sir," said a footman, "there's a lady here who insists on seeing you immediately."

"A lady! What is her name?"

"Mrs. Delamar, Sir," said the man, in an awed tone.

Waverton said afterward that he knew then how a man felt when his executioner entered the cell and waked him from a pleasant dream. For once completely nonplussed, he looked at Doris as though for counsel.

"Send Mrs. Delamar in here," she said to the footman, speaking with the magnificent self-control wherein a woman sometimes shows her superiority to a mere man.

"I am more than glad that you and I have reached some sort of understanding," she said, smiling sweetly at Waverton. "I think it will be mutually helpful if we face this dragon together. Do you agree? You must decide quickly!"

He stooped over her, and his hand rested for an instant on her shoulder. "When the Lord created Para-

dise, he also created woman as man's helpmate," he said thickly, and then, with a swish of silk and an air of complete dominance, Mrs. Delamar entered.

CHAPTER XVII.

Wherein "The Waverton Case" Collapses

TWO things were immediately discernible from Mrs. Delamar's demeanor,—she did not recognize Doris Waverton, because she had never seen her, and the portraits published in the press at the time of the divorce proceedings would serve Doris excellently either as a disguise or to prove an alibi; and she was quite unprepared for the presence of another woman in the room. But she was in no wise disconcerted. An adventuress of the front rank, a woman accustomed to carry herself well in society, she advanced without flurry or perceptible lack of ease.

"Sorry if I am intruding, Clo-Clo," she said, ostentatiously disregarding Doris after the first glance of surprise. "The fact is, I rushed here from Albany in an auto, as I felt I had to have a long chat with you on some very important business. I came away soon after daybreak, and stopped only once near Lake George for a snack while my chauffeur was replenishing the gasoline tank. Would you mind ordering me some breakfast? Anything will do. We can talk while I eat."

Determined to carry Waverton by storm, she evidently meant to hold out her well-gloved hand; but she had the sense to refrain when she looked into his eyes.

"It sounds rather inhospitable, but I would suggest that you run on into the town," he said. "It is only a mile away, and you will find a very fair hotel there,—O'Hara's."

Mrs. Delamar only smiled. She was sure of her quarry; but her sharp scrutiny had detected a resemblance between the hatted and veiled lady seated near the window and the photograph on the table. The discovery induced a certain wariness.

"I don't wish to disturb your household arrangements," she said sweetly, "and I can wait for a meal till I reach the hotel you speak of; but I must have a few minutes' private talk with you first. It is absolutely imperative!"

"Have you something to say that you do not wish Mrs. Waverton to hear?"

Mrs. Delamar almost started. So her half-formed suspicion was correct,—the woman whose face was in the shadow was really Doris Waverton! Well, the position bristled with difficulties; but she would not withdraw now. Why should she? If Mrs. Waverton had been so egregiously deceived, the fact only rendered her position all the more impregnable.

"That is exactly as you choose, Clo-Clo," she said; then she added, apparently as an afterthought, "Perhaps you don't like me to use that name before—before Mrs. Waverton? What shall I call you, then? Not Claude, surely?"

"Am I to understand, Claude, that this person is Mrs. Kyrle, alias Josephine Delamar?" broke in Doris's voice, calm and well modulated as if this chance encounter was the preliminary to a luncheon party.

"Yes," said Waverton, secretly amazed at this girl-widow's attitude; though he had sense enough to play up to it valiantly. "You see for yourself, Doris, that Mrs. Delamar's visit was unexpected, and it rests wholly with you whether or not you care to hear what she has to communicate."

Mrs. Waverton flashed a look of unutterable scorn at Mrs. Delamar. "I prefer to remain," she said. Then she turned a nonchalant gaze on her adversary. "Will you be good enough to explain yourself briefly to Mr. Waverton, and then leave us?"

Mrs. Delamar's urbanity was unshaken by this direct attack. It would not serve her purpose to unmask her batteries before Doris; though she would have dearly loved to tumble her rival's citadel of disdain in ruins about her feet. As it was, she disregarded her, with a deliberate indifference that was intended to gall, and was certainly well assumed. When all was said and done, the pretty little fool would soon have to abandon any dream she might harbor of reclaiming her divorced husband!

"I can only urge the expediency of a private conversation," she said, looking calmly at Waverton. "I am actuated solely by regard for your own interests; in this matter, at any rate. Afterward you can decide whether or not you care to share confidences with a third party."

Clancy would have reveled in this play of innuendo, this clawing of soft flesh beneath fine raiment; but Waverton, fearful on Doris's account, looked and felt profoundly uncomfortable. He knew, of course, what lay behind Mrs. Delamar's self-imposed mission, and that he must have Mrs. Waverton's active help if that mission were to fail; but he could not bring himself to seek the cooperation he needed, and was actually on the point of suggesting the transference of this unwelcome visitor to the drawing room, when Doris sprang to the rescue.

"Have you come here, Mrs. Kyrle," she said, "to amuse my husband with the ridiculous canard whispered by some evil-minded person that he is not Claude Waverton, but a man named Charles Scott, tutor to a Spanish gentleman from the Argentine? If that is all, you have taken needless trouble in the matter, because, notwithstanding the unhappy relationship that Claude and I bear to each other, I cannot refuse him a wife's assistance in crushing such a stupid and malevolent invention. It reached my ears through the authorities, and I am here at their request to refute it, fully and finally."

WAVERTON drew a breath between his teeth with a sibilant sound, as though he had been running, yet meant, by sheer force of will, to conceal the stress

and effort of his lungs. What a glorious creature was this slim, girlish looking woman! How fearlessly had she drawn a sword in his behalf! With what an air had she thrown aside the scabbard! During a few blissful seconds he ignored the precipice at his feet, and saw only the fair prospect beyond, whither the fickle goddess was beckoning him to a domain so entrancing that its mere vision bereft him of his senses.

But Mrs. Delamar hugged no illusions. Had Doris struck her in the face, she could not have been more surprised than when the story of Waverton's imposture was so coolly flung in her teeth, and by the last person alive whom she would have suspected of championing his cause. She saw now, with the unerring instinct of her class, that the man would sink to the perdition of a convict settlement rather than marry her, and it only remained to maim and trample on the woman who despised her so openly.

"I think I begin to understand the bearings of an affair that, I admit, puzzled me at first," she said, choosing her words with deadly intent, and looking from one to the other of her hearers with quiet malice. "Claude Waverton is dead. I know it now; and you two know it, but hope to bluff me out of my knowledge. Of course, if Claude Waverton came to life again, his widow would

"I Seem to Have Interrupted a Rehearsal."



not be a widow but a divorcee. What a pretty romance! I seem to have stepped in at an untimely moment. I have interrupted a rehearsal. Well, I leave you to it. I cannot say I give you my blessing, because that would not be true. In fact, Mrs. Waverton, alias Mrs. Charles Scott, I forbid the banns!"

And with that she was gone. Before either of them uttered a word, they heard the snorting of an engine which had been stopped and needed to be started again by hand. Evidently, Mrs. Delamar's chauffeur had anticipated a longer rest after the long run from Albany.

DORIS WAVERTON rose and threw open the window. The action was eloquent. "What a horrid person!" she sighed, with such uncontrolled relief that Waverton's eyes kindled for a second, though his brow was clouded; and if Doris had not been so overwrought she must have noticed his brooding anxiety.

"I think we have got the worst over now," said he, forcing a smile when she turned her radiant eyes full on him at the sound of his voice.

"Yes; but I have yet a difficult task to perform. I must try and hoodwink that little detective man. Will that be possible, do you think? Don't you see, no matter how much he may suspect that you are Charles Scott, he cannot prove it against such a heap of wit-

nesses. What can he do against so many,—Rice, and the other servants, and your lawyer—and myself?"

Poor Doris! Her illogical summing up of the odds in his favor had a pathetic side to which she was blind. The valet, who, half an hour ago, was recommended to clear out of the country to avoid prosecution, was now cited as providing irrefutable testimony in Waverton's favor. She was thinking only of danger to Waverton because the police had discovered that he was Scott, the unknown, whereas the real and active danger lay now with Mrs. Delamar and Tearle. Inquiry meant ultimate discovery,—of that Waverton had no manner of doubt,—but he would have cut off his right hand rather than dash the enthusiasm of his new-found friend in this moment of triumph mingled with defeat.

"I cannot tell you now how sensible I am of your goodness to me," he murmured, striving almost frantically to frame words that would convey no hint of the purpose taking shape in his mind. "Some other day, when our sky is less troubled, I may, perhaps, have an opportunity to thank you for the trust you are reposing in me. But, if I am to win clear of the present morass, I must know at least in which direction lies the path to safety. You speak of a detective. I think his name is Clancy, a far more subtle and dangerous man than his colleague, Steingall, whom you may not have met. Is he close at hand? Do you know when and where to look for him?"

"Oh," she gasped, yielding to a new terror, "he is staying at O'Hara's! He will meet that woman! She will tell him she has been here, and if she repeats any of the dreadful things she said just now he may become suspicious of an understanding between us. Ah! it is useless now to think how differently we might have dealt with this trying situation. Why didn't you meet me at Narragansett Pier? You were not afraid to give me your confidence today; yet I would have been just as ready to listen then."

It was on the tip of his tongue to remind her that he fled from Narragansett Pier because he had not seen her; but he crushed the impulse, though his heart pounded in fierce tumult as he watched the color ebb and flow in her face, and realized that no slight share of her agitation arose from vague glimpses of the nature of the extraordinary alliance forced on them by circumstances.

Above all else, it was essential that he should gain time, and he clutched at the straw offered by her frenzied reference to Mrs. Delamar.

"Let me understand the position exactly," he said. "You came here by Clancy's advice. You were to take possession,—force my hand, in fact,—and, whether I yielded or showed fight, he was to ring up the heavy artillery of the law this afternoon. Is that it?"

She nodded miserably.

"Very well," he said. "I think I can checkmate Mrs. Delamar, at any rate. Now, I want you to remain here, while I go and find this detective. That is the last thing Mrs. Delamar will expect; so it is a display of sound tactics. I shall reason with him, in all probability bring him back with me. By that time some of the excitement will have cooled down, and you will be better prepared to assure him that I am unquestionably Claude Waverton. Then we must part, you to travel to Narragansett Pier, very much out of humor with the police, and I to perfect my defenses against other assaults. It may not be the wisest of plans; but it is the only one I can conjure up at the moment, and it certainly promises to serve our purpose, which is to disarm official inquiry—at any rate, for the present."

"I shall be on tenterhooks till you return," said Doris, and her eyes grew moist. Not for an instant had she doubted Waverton's story. Woman like, she put intuition before reason, and she knew now why she had placed faith in this man since the hour of that impassioned appeal during their meeting on the shore of the lake.

"Before I go, there is one thing I want to say, and which I hope you will remember," he said, in a voice so strained and grave that it penetrated the very fiber of her being. "After today deceit is at an end between you and me. You have shown your belief in me, Mrs. Waverton, in such conditions as few men might hope to be tested by and survive the ordeal. You will never regret it, never! No matter what befalls in the future, I shall take good care that your trust is not falsified."

THEN he left her, without daring even to touch her hand, lest his fortitude should prove unequal to the strain he was about to impose on it. She listened for the departure of his automobile, and then rang for Rice. She felt that she dared not remain alone; for her brain was on fire with amazing thoughts, and it would be a relief to force herself to talk.

But Rice was not in the house. Waverton had taken him in the motor.

"The valet cannot be going very far, Madam," said the footman, "because he went without his hat."

This argument was convincing; so Doris wandered out into the garden, but with ever an eye for the main avenue, and when Rice appeared, bareheaded and walking rapidly, she went to meet him.

Before she could speak he handed her a letter. He looked very much concerned, almost woebegone; for by this time he was well acquainted with his master's ways.

"Mr. Claude wrote this at the lodge, Madam, an' told me to bring it to you without delay," he said.

She grew pale, without knowing why; but when she opened the letter her face became so gray and wan that the valet was alarmed. For this is what she read:

DEAR MRS. WAVERTON.—You will be shocked and grieved by the course I have decided on; but I pray you to try and look at matters in their proper light. There is no escape for me now. Within a few hours, or days, the police

will have established my identity beyond dispute. Not even your kind heart can save me, and I would count myself a coward indeed if I allowed you to injure your good name in my behalf.

Therefore, I have gone to New York, where I shall surrender myself to the law. I am determined to avoid the scandal of a public trial, and I believe that, as an escaped convict, I can be dealt with departmentally without making an appearance in court. At any rate, I shall petition the authorities to send me direct to Mexico. I am an innocent man; though I have little hope now of establishing my innocence. Still, the new Mexican Government may take a merciful view of my case, and I shall count a few years of penal servitude as weighing light in the scale against the degradation and suffering you would be called on to endure if I made a useless effort to establish myself as the man whom I have pretended to be.

Of course, I realize that you will be pained by my action; but, believe me, there is no other way to retrieve the blunders of the past. If permitted, I shall write to you. Now goodbye, and God bless you!

CLAUDE WAVERTON.

So that was what he meant when he said that her trust in him would not be falsified! To save her from a position that she now saw to be impossible, he had gone back to herd with Mexican convicts. Her vision had suddenly become preternaturally clear. She had persuaded herself that her actions were dictated by gratitude to the man who had saved her child's life, by womanly sympathy with one who had endured so many buffets at the hands of Fate. But all the pretense vanished in the strong, fierce light that beat on her soul as she stood distraught in the sunshine with the letter clutched in her nerveless fingers.

For she loved this man! She had loved him since the moment when she pleaded with him mistakenly as a wayward husband whom she was ready to take back to her heart. And with the knowledge of her love came high resolve. She had friends, influence in high places, and she would face all rebuffs, endure every sneer, if only she could win his freedom.

"Faint?" she cried, awaking from a trance at some startled cry of Rice's. "One does not faint when one has such a duty laid on one's shoulders as your master has placed on mine. But he needs us. We must not lose an instant. Come with me to New York. I must have some human sympathy today, or I shall go mad!"

She was, in truth, nearly distraught; but her purpose was immovable as a wall of brass. The valet was about to summon a carriage from the stables when the victoria that Mrs. Waverton herself had ordered came ambling up the avenue.

IN it was Clancy, and he leaped out when the vehicle overtook Doris as she was walking unsteadily to the house.

"I am here a good deal before the appointed time, Ma'am," he said; "but I have the best of reasons—"

He stopped; for Doris was gazing at him with an expression he had seen too often in a woman's face, but little thought to see in hers that day.

"Even now you are too late!" she said, with a strange lilt of scornful triumph in her voice. "Claude Waverton has gone to New York to give himself up to the authorities. If you want to know why, read!" and she thrust Waverton's letter before Clancy's astonished eyes.

It was a foolish thing to do, though it supplied a last proof of her unconquerable faith; but the detective skimmed through the document with a careless rapidity hardly to be expected from an officer of the law to whom was being revealed an extraordinary sequel to an extraordinary case.

"Just the sort of mad-headed scheme he would carry out!" he cried joyously. "I liked him from the first moment I met him in Providence, and the good opinion I formed of him has been borne out in the most singular way. Even now, you see, this unnecessary flight redounds wholly to his credit."

"Unnecessary—flight!" gasped Doris.

"Yes, Ma'am. That is why I hurried here. A certain person of the feminine gender found me at O'Hara's, and told me such a spiteful yarn of events that I thought it best to come here in your victoria, and thus make sure of not missing you. Claude Waverton will be a very surprised man when he arrives at the bureau, because my friend Steingall will show him a cablegram from the Chief of Police in Mexico City which announces that the half-caste who really committed the murder for which Mr. Waverton was convicted confessed his crime four years ago. The authorities did not publish the fact widely; and their excuse is that it could do no good, since the Claude Waverton concerned was reported to have been drowned some years earlier in an English vessel that was lost with all hands off the coast of Paraguay. Now, you must bear up, Ma'am; though good news is often as trying as bad news."

But Doris felt that she wanted to cry her heart out, and the tears welled forth, strive against them as she might.

SO, after all, Mrs. Waverton did not go to New York and besiege department offices; but she sent a telegram, written and rewritten a dozen times before it was despatched, and received another shortly before midnight next day, the telegraph office being kept open till its arrival.

Then she hastened to Narragansett Pier, and nearly a month elapsed before Waverton wrote from 64th-st. to announce that by payment of much money, by the use of powerful influence, and above all because of the assistance of Clancy and Steingall, he had been allowed to escape prosecution for the many and varied offenses he had committed when he assumed a dead man's personality and estates.

AT last came the day when the two sisters and little Kathleen drove to the railroad station at Narragansett Pier, and met the incoming New York express.

Mrs. Daunt eyed the new Claude Waverton with a covert curiosity that soon merged into active approval.

"I suppose, Doris," she said late that evening, when kissing her sister goodnight, "I suppose—"

Doris flushed a vivid red under Phyllis's close scrutiny. "You need not suppose anything," she murmured. "The wedding is arranged for next month."

"Good gracious!" came the surprised cry. "You have not been long in settling matters. Why, you and he have not been alone together more than a minute since he arrived. How did you manage to reach the point of fixing the date so speedily?"

"Oh, that was quite easy. Claude told me that Rice had heard, somehow or other, that Tearle had married Mrs. Delamar."

"What has that got to do with it?"

"Well, he said that it was the only sort of good example they were ever likely to set anybody, so we might as well follow it."

And that is all that is really of interest in the Waverton Case. Rice soon recovered from the shock of re-adjusting his ideas as to his master's identity, and when he saw an anchor tattooed on Claude Waverton's breast he understood why his services as masseur had been dispensed with.

ODDLY enough, it was Steingall who paid for the three dinners. He argued the matter long and loud; but Clancy and Forbes wore him down, and he paid like a man.

Clancy chose the menu, that was embellished with a spirited drawing of an owl, whose talons held a scroll bearing the legend, "Some folks are quare, they are!"

For various reasons, the feast did not take place until long after the date fixed originally; but, from a remark passed by Forbes when the coffee-and-cigars stage was reached, it was evident that the authorities were still keeping an eye on Mrs. Delamar.

"Strange thing that she should buy doses of a powerful narcotic at various drugstores in New York before her visit to Absecon," he said. "What do you make of it, you two?"

"I know," said Steingall.

"You mean that you can guess," said Clancy.

"No, I know. You may try your hand at guessing, if you like; then I shall tell you whether or not you are right."

"Well, then, my notion is this: Mrs. Delamar bought the various ingredients for her husband in the hope and belief that he meant to kill himself. She realized that there was a good deal of risk in returning to the cottage at night; but she dared everything in order to make sure that the man was dead. I have an idea too that

Tearle followed her, or was spying on her, and that he knew so much that she dare not refuse to marry him when their matrimonial schemes collapsed elsewhere."

"Good for you, Son! Now listen to a voice from the grave!"

He produced a letter and unfolded it.

"This document," he went on, "arrived at the bureau from Australia yesterday, and I kept it for this evening's festival. It was addressed to the Detective Bureau, New York, and had been forwarded by the writer, Herbert Widdlake Kyrle, to an acquaintance in Sydney, New South Wales, with a request that it should be posted a month later. Consequently, it has been ninety-five days on its travels."

Then he read:

TO THE CHIEF OF THE DETECTIVE BUREAU, NEW YORK: SIR.—If there is any justification for your repute, my wife, Josephine Kyrle, should have been placed on her trial, and possibly electrocuted, for my murder before this letter reaches you. I really do not care a straw whether or not she has paid the penalty of the law, because she murdered my soul long ago, and it matters little when or how the body followed its predominant partner to extinction. But, even if she is not already dead, she certainly must have been exterminated socially; so I now tell you that I killed myself by drinking a solution of crystals of nicotine after I had dulled my senses and atrophied my palate by a big dose of bromid and lime juice.

Hence, my body will be found in my derelict cutter, as the weather on this June day seems to be settled, and the yacht will drift out with the tide into the track of passing vessels. If Josephine still lives, she will have been sufficiently punished; so I have made her my sole legatee. On the other hand, if she is dead, and there is truly a meeting beyond the grave, I shall explain matters fully and amicably; since, in any event, we are quits.

For a little while the three men sat in silence. Then Clancy picked up a cigar, crackled the wrapper, and smelt it.

"Will you send a copy of that letter to Claude G. Waverton?" he asked.

"I'll tell him about it, anyhow."

"What of Mrs. Delamar?"

"I suppose she ought to know too."

"It will cheer her and Tearle immensely, because she will realize that she has been bluffed into an unnecessary marriage."

"Well, that is the end of the Waverton Case," and Steingall blew rings of smoke as he looked up at the ceiling.

But Clancy sighed. To him, the man hunter, the chase was everything and the capture of small account. And the Waverton Case had certainly provided a thrilling chase.

THE END

HOW I EARNED MY FIRST DOLLAR



By HENRY M. GOLDFOGLE
Congressman from New York

I EARNED my first dollar selling newspapers in the streets of New York, before I was ten years old. At this work I helped to support Mother and to educate my deaf-mute brother. It did not seem like hard work to me then; for I was glad to make the sales, and then too I was ambitious for an education. I began with selling copies of the old "Daily News."

I went to school from nine o'clock until three p. m. Then I went to a private school where foreign languages were taught. I taught bookkeeping at night, and after that found time to study my lessons for the following day.

By working in this strenuous way, I was able to educate my brother and to support the family as well. I got up in the wee small hours of the morning and sold my papers until time to go to school, and did not do much loafing on the job during the rest of my waking hours.

By CHARLES T. BROWN
Wall Street Banker

THE memory of how I earned my first cent antedates my first dollar experience, and gave me almost as much worry because I could not think of a way to spend it. I picked up potatoes that had been dug from the hills and put them into baskets. My reward was a penny. I had all the clothes I needed; my wants were few and supplied by my parents. If I wanted candy, they bought it for me. What I should do with that penny worried me. I took it to bed with me, and thought about it during the day, until I almost came to wish that I had not earned it. I don't to this day know whatever became of it; for I had so many hiding places and was so afraid that someone would rob me that it disappeared and I never had the pleasure of spending it; but I do recollect how I happened to earn my first dollar, later on.

I was just nine years old when I read in a weekly

paper that came to the farm how a bright, energetic boy might earn a dollar, or a violin, or a bolt of muslin, or anyone of a number of prizes, by taking up subscriptions for ten dollars' worth of merchandise in a city store.

I studied the matter over, and concluded that I could overcome Mother's objection to my soliciting among the neighbors for these subscriptions, if I would make her a present of the first prize. Of course she was pleased, and I was permitted to canvass among the farmers' families until the next ten dollars' worth would bring me my much coveted violin.

Alas for the peace of the family after my violin was delivered! I nearly drove the folks distracted. There was no music in it. Now I believe that I could make a better one myself. The cheapest kind of box and strings, and the bow was indescribable. At last the family could stand it no longer, and the edict was issued that I might play it provided I went out to the woodshed or barn. The horses could stand it, because they were hitched. The first thing I did after coming from the field at noon was to get my violin from its place in the corner and make such music as I could manufacture at a safe distance from the house. Then, at night, alone and under the stars, I sawed away until I was told to come in and go to bed.

I might have been contented with my musical possession if it had not been for a religious revival in a county next to ours. A man who owned a good violin experienced religion and joined the Methodist Church, and gave his violin to his nephew, a neighbor's son of my own age.

Up to this time I had never liked that boy. I never considered him very bright; but now I began to cultivate him, and every opportunity I had to show him a friendly spirit I did not neglect to do so. At last a scheme began to formulate in my mind that I would trade him my violin for his with other possessions to boot. But while I made up my mind to trade him in the spring of that year, I kept my own counsel; for all the things I had and knew he coveted would have no value

